

Open Research Online

The Open University's repository of research publications
and other research outputs

Managing values : the reproduction of organisational values in social economy organisations

Thesis

How to cite:

Aiken, Mike (2002). Managing values : the reproduction of organisational values in social economy organisations.
PhD thesis The Open University.

For guidance on citations see [FAQs](#).

© 2002 The Author

Version: Version of Record

Copyright and Moral Rights for the articles on this site are retained by the individual authors and/or other copyright owners. For more information on Open Research Online's data [policy](#) on reuse of materials please consult the policies page.

oro.open.ac.uk

**Managing Values:
the reproduction of organisational values
in social economy organisations**

Mike Aiken BA (Hons), MA, Dip. Couns.

This is submitted for the degree of PhD at the Centre for Complexity
and Change at the Open University, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA, UK.
September 2002

Acknowledgements:

I would like thank Roger Spear, my first supervisor, who has provided me with extensive personal, professional and intellectual support over a period of four years and we've had some good lunches too. Without him I would not have come this far. In addition to being a friendly and available voice over nearly four years he has lent me books, helped me with contacts and read many garbled drafts, sometimes at an hour's notice or less.

I would also like to thank Alan Thomas, my second supervisor, for his support and ideas. His sideways insights on the project over the whole period, often over a sandwich, deepened my understandings and offered new directions.

The responsibility for what has emerged rests with me.

This work was made possible by financial support from an ESRC grant (award number: S00429837041) and the Unity Trust Bank as CASE partner (thanks to Steve Round). I also want to acknowledge the financial support at different times from my department CCC, as well as the Faculty of Technology and the Open University.

Other big thanks go to:

- **Peers** who were peerless over so many lunches and awkward times: Rachel Slater, Kerry Platman, Massaki Morishito, Liz Redfern, Terry Newholm and Francis Meynell.

- **Other colleagues at the OU** who gave particularly of their times or expertise: Jim Fredrickson, Jill Mordaunt, Chris Cornforth, Rob Paton, Clive Savory, David Wield, Steve Potter, Chris Blackmore as well as Pat Shah, Angela Walters, Mary McVay, Carol Morgan and Cilla Brooks. Nicola in the cafe too.

- **People in organisations I visited**, and all the people who agreed to help or talk to me. Especial thanks to Ruth Black and Mike Taylor at Ormiston, Mick Carols at St Mungo's; Graham Mayo, Caroline Townsend-Coles and Jackie Sweet at Infinity, colleagues at Shelter, Peter Couchman and Katharin Lüddecke at Oxford Swindon and Gloucester, Ursula Lidbetter at Lincoln Co-op Society, Fred Freundlich at Mondragon, Peter Harper at CAT, Iain Tuckett at Coin Street, Keith, Ben and Sara at BUDD.

- **Personal friends and colleagues** who sustained, encouraged or helped me. Especial big thanks to Susan Truce. Lots of others offered encouragement, solace or skills: Mary Doyle, Paul Jonas, Olufemi Hughes, Bob Glaberson, Kate Whittle, Sara Bragg, Mark Erickson, Elaine Sharland, Judy Lister, John Pryor, Melissa Martin, Joyce Connor, Chris Cunninghamme, Karen Ramsey, Bernard Claydon.

- **Colleagues at other universities** shared freely of ideas or gave useful tips: Claire Bradshaw, Margaret Harris, Marilyn Taylor, Jeff Hearn, Richard Winter.

- **The staff at the OU Research Centre** with Allison Robinson have been efficient, prompt, helpful and friendly to me throughout.

- **Big thanks to the technology:** Apple Mac for the PowerPC and imac which saw me through, and software which never failed: ClarisWorks, AppleWorks, Netscape, Eudora, Nudist, Endnote. I would also never have got to and from the OU without a Brompton bike so thanks to Storrington Cycles.

Abstract

This thesis examines how quality social economy organisations reproduce their organisational values. The ‘social economy’ sector is of growing importance in the European Union for employment and as a deliverer of public services. Others see social economy organisations as an important component of civil society: as advocates for the disadvantaged, as critics of social injustice, and as innovators of social changes (Korten 1990; Putnam 1993). These organisations are seen as distinctive in being independent of government and commercial enterprise, and because they are value-based. This study examined a crucial issue for social economy organisations: how they reproduce their distinctive values.

The research examined six social economy organisations in the voluntary and co-operative sector in the UK using an exploratory case study strategy. Semi-structured interviews, documentary evidence and group discussions were used to illuminate the understandings of organisational actors. Organisations were chosen in a range that stretched from a worker co-operative operating in commercial markets; through to social enterprises using a mixture of public, private and charitable income streams; to charities using grants and government contracts.

The study assumed a realist ontology. It drew from institutionalist and management culture theories informed by the not-for-profit research literature. The argument has been that economically orientated value-based organisations will face inevitable degeneration in the face of market pressures with a loss of their distinctive values (Webb 1930). A parallel argument has suggested that charitable organisations face threats to their independence from statutory funding regimes particularly with contracts for welfare services (Taylor 1990). This study suggests that a decline of values may occur, but that it is not inevitable, and shows some of the processes operating in social economy organisations which can enable and encourage the reproduction of values. These included integrated organisational structures which gave space to embed values in practise and enabled key values to influence decision-making processes.

Contents

Acknowledgments	ii
Abstract	iii
Contents	iv
List of Figures	xii

• Chapter 1: Introducing Organisational Values in Social Economy Organisations and Reviewing the Field

1.1 Introduction	1
1.1.1 Summary of this study	3
1.1.2 Overview of the thesis	3
1.2 Reviewing Social Organisations and their Values	4
1.2.1 What are social economy organisations?	4
1.2.2 Conceptions of the social economy	5
1.2.3 Community enterprise and social enterprise organisations	8
1.2.4 A pragmatic approach to definitions	9
1.2.5 Why are social economy organisations important?	10
1.2.6 What are organisational values?	11
1.2.7 Why are organisational values important?	12
1.2.8 Theorising about organisational values	15
1.2.9 Organisational culture	16
1.2.10 Organisational environments	17
1.2.11 Social movements and social developments	19
1.2.12 Introduction to reproduction	20
1.3 Themes and Factors Affecting Values: an example	20
1.3.1 Social Movements	21
1.3.2 The place of ideas and values in Mondragon	21
1.3.3 Internal organisational factors	22
1.3.4 External organisational environment	22
1.3.5 Summary: Mondragon and themes related to values	23
1.4 Conclusion	24

• Chapter 2: Theoretical Considerations

2.1 Theoretical Assumptions	25
2.1.1 The progress of the reluctant constructivist	26
2.1.2 Objections to positivism and constructivism	27
2.1.3 Summary of realist position adopted in this study	29
2.1.4 Theoretical views on reproduction	29
2.1.5 Organisations are different from society	30
2.1.6 Stryjan on the reproduction of membership	31
2.2 Organisational Values	33
2.2.1 Can organisations have values and are they positive?	33
2.2.2 Values and organisational culture	37

2.2.3	Culture and values as objects	38
2.2.4	Culture and values as meanings	40
2.2.5	Towards a definition of organisational values	41
2.2.6	Summary of approaches	42
2.2.7	From culture to context	42
2.3	Organisations and their Environments	43
2.3.1	Environments	43
2.3.2	Communities of practice	46
2.3.3	Social movements	47
2.3.4	Diani's definition of social movements	48
2.3.5	Fields and habitus in inter-organisational activity	49
2.4	Typification of Organisational Values	49
2.5	Conclusion	50

• Chapter 3: Research Strategy

3.1	General Approach to Research Strategy	51
3.1.1	Theoretical and practical considerations	51
3.1.2	The importance of conceptual categories	52
3.1.3	The road to case study research	52
3.1.4	Surveys as an investigative strategy	54
3.1.5	What are case studies?	54
3.1.6	Embedded or holistic design in case studies	56
3.1.7	Researcher skills in case study research	56
3.1.8	Objections to case studies: generalisability and subjectivity	56
3.1.9	Summary of reasons supporting the research strategy	58
3.1.10	Review of classic case studies	58
3.2	Research Design	61
3.2.1	Overview and rationale	61
3.2.2	An ethnographic or clinical approach?	61
3.2.3	An initial exploratory study	62
3.2.4	The approach	62
3.2.5	Organising typologies	63
3.2.6	Framework	64
3.2.7	Outcomes of exploratory comparative study	64
3.2.8	Research questions	65
3.2.9	Summary of the elements of the design	66
3.2.10	Selecting cases	66
3.2.11	Methods	68
3.2.12	Data analysis	68
3.3	Reflections on the Research	69
3.3.1	The research in action	69
3.3.2	Choice of cases	70
3.3.3	Revised category: commercial markets and quasi-markets	70
3.3.4	Practical adjustments	70
3.3.5	The difficulty of locating campaigning organisations	71
3.3.6	Value carriers and external advocates	72
3.3.7	Some issues on ethics: confidentiality	72

3.3.8	Some notes on writing	74
3.3.9	Conclusion	75

• Chapter 4: Quasi-market organisations: three major cases

4.1 Ormiston Children and Families Trust

4.1 Ormiston Children and Families Trust: an overview	77
4.1.1 Introduction	77
4.1.2 The story of Ormiston	77
4.1.3 Ormiston today	78
4.1.4 The research	78
Ormiston and Organisational Values	80
4.1.5 Espoused values at Ormiston	80
4.1.6 Key stakeholders' accounts of values at Ormiston	81
4.1.7 Types of values at Ormiston	83
Factors Affecting Values at Ormiston	84
4.1.8 People processes and value carriers	84
4.1.9 External advocates	86
4.1.10 Informal processes	86
4.1.11 Organisational structures	87
4.1.12 Cross-organisational groups	87
4.1.13 Core and periphery	88
4.1.14 Management committee	88
4.1.15 Income streams	89
4.1.16 Social movements	92
A Values Example at Ormiston	93
4.1.17 The Equal Opportunities Group	93
4.1.18 Diffusing equal opportunities across projects	95
4.1.19 Additional points on equal opportunities	96
4.1.20 Preliminary assessment of values reproduction at Ormiston	96

4.2 Shelter

4.2 Shelter: an overview	98
4.2.1 Introduction	98
4.2.2 The story of Shelter	98
4.2.3 Shelter today	99
4.2.4 The research	99
Shelter and Organisational Values	100
4.2.5 Espoused values at Shelter	100
4.2.6 Key stakeholders' accounts of values at Shelter	101
4.2.7 Types of values at Shelter	105
Factors Affecting Values	106
4.2.8 People processes and value carriers	106
4.2.9 External advocates	109
4.2.10 Informal processes	109

4.2.11	Organisational structure	110
4.2.12	Reflections on Shelter from other sources	111
4.2.13	Insulation of organisational core	112
4.2.14	Shelter as a 'traditional organisation?'	113
4.2.15	Income streams	113
4.2.16	Shelter and quasi-markets	114
4.2.17	How does Shelter differ from Commercial Providers of advice?	114
4.2.18	Social Movements	114
	A Values Example at Shelter	115
4.2.19	Contract Culture	115
4.2.20	Preliminary assessment of values reproduction at Shelter	117

4.3 St Mungo's

4.3 St Mungo's: an overview	119
4.3.1 Introduction	119
4.3.2 The story of St Mungo's	119
4.3.3 St Mungo's today	120
4.3.4 The research	121
St Mungo's and Organisational Values	122
4.3.5 Espoused values at St Mungo's	122
4.3.6 Key stakeholders' accounts of values at St Mungo's	123
4.3.7 Types of values at St Mungo's	125
Factors Affecting Values at St Mungo's	126
4.3.8 Value carriers and people processes	126
4.3.9 External advocates	128
4.3.10 Informal processes	128
4.3.11 Organisational structure	130
4.3.12 Induction processes and away days	130
4.3.13 Cross project groups and forums	131
4.3.14 St Mungo's role as an Industrial and Provident Society	131
4.3.15 The board	132
4.3.16 Income streams	132
4.3.17 Social movements	134
A Values Example at St Mungo's	136
4.3.18 Cat teams and contracts	136
4.3.19 Preliminary assessment of values reproduction at St Mungo's	138

4.4 Brighton Urban Design and Development (BUDD)

4.4 BUDD		
4.4.1	BUDD a contrasting minor case of values in a small informal organisation	140
4.4.2	BUDD and this research	141
4.4.3	BUDD Values	141
	Factors Affecting Values at BUDD	142
4.4.4	People processes	142
4.4.5	Structure	143
4.4.6	Income streams	143

4.4.7	Social movements	143
	A Values Example at BUDD	143
4.4.8	A deal with the developers?	143
4.4.9	Reproduction of Values in a Small Informal Organisation	144

• Chapter 5: Three case studies from commercial organisations

5.1 The Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT)

5.1 The Centre for Alternative Technology: an overview	147
5.1.1 Introduction	147
5.1.2 The story of CAT	148
5.1.3 CAT today	148
5.1.4 The research	149
CAT and Organisational Values	150
5.1.5 Espoused values at CAT	150
5.1.6 Key stakeholder's accounts of CAT values	151
5.1.7 Shifts in values to replicable approaches	152
5.1.8 Co-operative working values	152
5.1.9 Types of values at CAT	153
Factors Affecting Values at CAT	153
5.1.10 People processes and value carriers	153
5.1.11 External advocates	156
5.1.12 Informal processes	156
5.1.13 Organisational structure	157
5.1.14 PSM meetings	157
5.1.15 Overview group	157
5.1.16 Other meetings	158
5.1.17 Selection of staff	158
5.1.18 PLC constitutional guarantees	160
5.1.19 Income streams	161
5.1.20 The restaurant	162
5.1.21 The shop	162
5.1.22 Consultancy	163
5.1.23 Location in state/ commercial markets	163
5.1.24 Summary of market forces	164
5.1.25 Social movements	165
A Values Example at CAT	165
5.1.26 The issue of the GM company	165
5.1.27 A preliminary assessment values reproduction at CAT	167

5.2 Infinity Wholefoods Co-operative

5.2. Infinity Wholefoods Co-operative Overview	168
5.2.1 Introduction	168
5.2.2 The story of Infinity	169

5.2.3	Infinity today	169
5.2.4	The research	169
	Infinity and Organisational Values	170
5.2.5	Espoused values at Infinity	170
5.2.6	Key stakeholders' accounts of values at Infinity	171
5.2.7	Types of values at Infinity	173
	Factors Affecting Values at Infinity	174
5.2.8	People processes and value carriers	174
5.2.9	External advocates	175
5.2.10	Informal processes	176
5.2.11	Organisational structure	179
5.2.12	Income streams	182
5.2.13	Social movements	183
	A Values Example at Infinity	185
5.2.14	Vitamin supplements	185
5.2.15	A preliminary assessment of values reproduction at Infinity	189

5.3 Coin Street Community Builders

5.3	Coin Street Community Builders: an Overview	190
5.3.1	Introduction to Coin Street	190
5.3.2	The story of Coin Street	190
5.3.3	Coin Street today	191
5.3.4	The research	193
	Coin Street and Organisational Values	194
5.3.5	Espoused values at Coin Street	194
5.3.6	Key stakeholders' accounts of values at Coin Street	194
5.3.7	Types of values at Coin Street	195
	Factors affecting values at Coin Street	197
5.3.8	People processes and value carriers	196
5.3.9	External advocates	198
5.3.10	Informal processes	198
5.3.11	Organisational structures	198
5.3.12	Income streams	200
5.3.13	Social movements	202
	A Values Example at Coin St The Issue of site A	203
5.3.14	The Issue of site A	203
5.3.15	Background to site A	204
5.3.16	What happened about site A	205
5.3.17	Factors Involved on values in the site A example	208
5.3.18	Preliminary assessment of values reproduction at Coin Street	208

5.4 Oxford, Swindon and Gloucester (OSG), and Lincoln Co-operative Society (LCS)

5.4:	Oxford, Swindon and Gloucester and Lincoln Co-operative Society: the contrasting case of values in large commercial member co-operatives	211
5.4.1	Overview	211
5.4.2	This research	212

5.4.3	Values	212
	Factors Affecting Reproduction	213
5.4.5	People processes and value carriers	213
5.4.5	Structures	213
5.4.6	Income streams	214
5.4.7	Social movements	215
	Values Example	215
5.4.8	Regenerating values	215
5.4.9	Reproduction of values in large member co-operative commercial organisations	216

• Chapter 6: Analysis of Results

6.1	Introduction	217
6.2	The Quasi-market Organisations	217
6.2.1	Constraints: income sources	217
6.2.2	Implications of figures on income sources	219
6.2.3	Does voluntary income equate with independence?	220
6.2.4	How Contracts Affected Organisational Values	221
6.2.5	Features of organisations	223
6.2.6	Processes and practises	226
6.2.7	Summary on quasi-market organisations and values	228
6.3	The Market Organisations	229
6.3.1	Constraints: income sources	229
6.3.2	Implications of figures on income sources	231
6.3.3	How Commercial Income Affected Organisational Values	232
6.3.4	Features of organisations	234
6.3.5	Processes and practises	235
6.3.6	Summary remarks on market organisations	236
6.4	General Comments	237

• Chapter 7: Conclusions

7.1	Trouble with Markets?	239
7.1.1	Commercial markets and values: friend or foe?	239
7.1.2	Commercial income: affect on product and process values	240
7.1.3	Different varieties of commercial income	241
7.1.4	The threat of morphing into public sector markets	241
7.1.5	Decline of process values	242
7.1.6	Voluntary organisations and contracting culture	243
7.1.7	Quasi-markets critiqued	244
7.1.8	Pay and the growth of professionalism	245
7.2	Organisational Features, Strategies and Processes	247
7.2.1	Limitations of the institutional account	247
7.2.2	The importance of agency for organisational values	250
7.3	Values Reproduction: towards a schema	252
7.4	Contesting not Embalming	252

Appendices:

Appendix 1:	Exploratory Study: organisations suggested by ‘experts’	254
Appendix 2:	Exploratory Study: organisations interviewed, July 1999	255
Appendix 3:	Exploratory Study: question script for Interviews, June 1999	256
Appendix 4:	Main Study: letter to organisational contacts	257
Appendix 5:	Main Study: cover of leaflet sent to organisational contacts	258
Appendix 6:	Main Study: interview questions, December 2000	259
Appendix 7:	Main Study: invitation to cross organisational seminar, Nov 2001	260

Bibliography	261
---------------------	------------

List of Figures

Figure 1.1:	The voluntary sector ‘diamond’	6
Figure 1.2:	Ways of thinking about the social economy	7
Figure 2.1:	Typification of organisational values	50
Figure 3.1:	Case selection: organisations close/distant to commercial markets	67
Figure 5.1:	Coin Street Group: structure	192
Figure 6.1:	Quasi-market organisations’ sources of income	218
Figure 6.2:	Market organisations’ income	230
Figure 7.1:	Outline schema factors for values reproduction	251

Chapter 1:

Introducing Organisational Values in Social Economy

Organisations and Reviewing the Field

This chapter introduces the theme of this research: the reproduction of organisational values in social economy organisations. The first part gives an introduction to the theme followed by a short summary of the research problem and then an overview of the structure of the thesis. The second part of this chapter starts to review some of the literature by examining what social economy organisations are and why they are important. It goes on to consider organisational values, and their importance in the current climate, with some preliminary thoughts on the reproduction of values. The third and last part of this chapter considers briefly the Mondragon co-operatives as an aid to suggesting some of the factors which might be of importance in values reproduction.

1.1 Introduction

The starting point of this enquiry was the question: what do social economy organisations, such as voluntary and co-operative organisations, do to *maintain* their essential organisational values? This was refined as the study progressed to include: how do these organisations *reproduce* and even *transform* their organisational values? The shift from maintain to *reproduce* was to reflect a more dynamic notion of values, rather than seeing them as carved on stone tablets and fixed for all time. Rather, the enquiry aimed to understand how those organisations which were engaged in some variety of social change agenda kept their values alive and meaningful in day-to-day practice, how they were *reproduced* through action by organisational actors. The idea of *transformation* took account of a further dynamism in the picture. Organisational values were not seen here as reproduced in the sense of replicated without alteration but as accessible to refinement and adaption in the light of new situations.

For the type of organisational values of interest here, which will be called 'social progress values' at present, the notion of fixity was especially unhelpful. Social economy organisations often have an explicit or implicit message about change they are seeking to realise in the social world. An organisation with a mission to campaign for the rights of the

homeless, for example, needs to consider what kind of people are homeless, the social and economic factors which give rise to their condition, the needs of the homelessness, and what action might assist them. All these may shift radically over time. This means the organisational values embedded in the mission of fighting such injustice may need active re-interpretation in new situations in a social world undergoing rapid transformation.

The term 'rapid social transformation' is a broad term but is placed here to alert us to the context in which the organisations studied were situated amidst this restructuring of social institutions. Giddens, for example, sees this transformation as a 'detraditionalising of society' under the weight of an 'intensifying of globalising processes' (Giddens 1994:105). Beck (1994:3) refers to these processes as 'a radicalisation of modernity' and a 'breaking up of existing contours' of industrial society but which opens up new possibilities. Such broad social transformations do form an important backdrop here and are arguably becoming visible in the changing boundaries between the state, for-profit and not-for-profit sectors. Six (1994a:404), for example, argues that a blurring between these three sectors has been taking place and will continue to do so.

Such considerations have an effect not just on how social economy organisations conceptualise themselves but also on their courses of action. An example here would be to consider how the work and underlying values of a campaigning environmental charity might be affected by moving into commercial markets, perhaps by accepting consultancies and sponsorships from large industrial companies. Alternatively we could consider how it might be compromised by undertaking significant contracts from government departments. These scenarios contain some of the kinds of dilemmas voluntary and co-operative organisations are increasingly likely to face amidst the shifting boundaries between sectors. Values are an important part of these organisation's resources for tackling such issues.

My concerns were to look not just at the constraints on social economy organisations in reproducing their organisational values. Those organisations sailing in even the most placid of seas might still face difficulties - and perhaps more so - in negotiating their values. Therefore I wanted to also examine the active processes in which actors within and around these organisations engaged to enable this reproduction of values. This led me to examine in the research the role of the following in the reproductive process: organisational structures, formal and informal; processes of debating and contesting where values were at stake; key people and their tacit and espoused knowledge of values; and social movements and other inter-organisational factors. A preliminary summary of the research as an early orientation to the reader will now be offered.

1.1.1 Summary of this Study: reproduction of organisational values

The broad research question was:

How do quality social economy organisations reproduce their organisational values?

This formed the starting point for the study, which looked at how quality organisations in the social economy reproduced their organisational values. The ‘social economy’ was used as a conceptual framework to examine voluntary and co-operative organisations with various mixes of commercial and non-commercial income.

Those active in social economy organisations have often claimed that being ‘value based’ is one of the features which distinguishes their organisations from their counterparts in the public or commercial sector. Such claims led to the following questions:

Firstly, what organisational strategies or processes do quality social economy organisations employ to maintain their core organisational values?

Secondly, what features, factors or conditions seem to help or hinder social economy organisations in maintaining their values?

Thirdly, what constraints from the environment do social economy organisations face in reproducing their values, specifically in regard to the effect of income streams from commercial markets or from government contracts or grants?

This study aimed to contribute to debates on the management of social economy organisations by increasing our understanding of one of their essential aspects: their core organisational values.

1.1.2 Overview of the Thesis

The remainder of this **chapter 1** reviews literature relating to the research theme. It offers a preliminary discussion of social economy organisations, organisational values and their reproduction, introduces some management thinking and research on these issues, and addresses the question: why are organisational values of importance? **Chapter 2** considers some of the epistemological assumptions underlying the approach adopted in this research. It extends the review of literature in chapter 1 by looking in more depth at organisational values. This is undertaken by examining organisational culture and thinking from the school of institutional writers on organisations. It concludes with a summative typification of organisational values for social economy organisations. **Chapter 3** sets out the rationale for

the research design and methods and shows how an exploratory study shaped the study. It discusses some of the dilemmas encountered during the research process. **Chapter 4** presents three major case studies on UK voluntary organisations analysed according to factors anticipated to affect values reproduction. **Chapter 5** presents three major case studies from UK social economy organisations operating predominantly in trading environments analysed under similar categories to those used in chapter 4. It ends by offering two minor case studies of different kinds of organisations: a large trading value-based organisation and a small informal campaigning group. **Chapter 6** provides a deeper analysis of the findings than that offered after each case. Finally, **Chapter 7** explores some of the implications of these findings for the field and for the wider literature on organisational studies. The **appendices** provide some more detailed information relating to methods used and some of the organisations studied in the research. The **bibliography** is placed at the end of the thesis.

1.2 Reviewing Social Organisations and their Values

1.2.1 What are Social Economy Organisations?

Until now, the term ‘social economy organisation’ has been used without explanation. In this section the idea of the social economy, and the organisations that are considered a part of it, is discussed through the lenses of various definitions. The ‘social economy’ is a fairly recent import into UK terminology from mainland Europe and is still not widely used. Terms such as ‘voluntary sector’, ‘co-operative sector’, ‘third sector’, ‘not-for-private-profit’, are all, to differing degrees, in more common usage and cover some similar ground.

The European Union included four types of organisations in its definition of social economy organisations: co-operatives, mutuals, non-governmental/ charitable organisations and associations (EC 1997). This is often referred to by the acronym ‘CMNA’ (Unity Trust Bank 1998; Birkhölzer 1996:42). More recently foundations have been added to this grouping. As noted, the economic importance of this sector is being increasingly recognised and the term ‘the social economy’ conveys the sense of the broader economic role these organisations are now seen to play. In the UK the term enables us to group together a range of organisations that are otherwise not easily categorised together. It can be seen to be broader than ‘the voluntary sector’ by encompassing organisations trading for social purposes, sometimes referred to as social enterprise organisations, which are discussed shortly. Under this definition organisations not distributing profits, such as co-operative and mutual interest organisations, are thus included with voluntary organisations. Together

they are seen as forming a sector which is distinguished from state and private sectors.

It should be pointed out that while the EU definition can be used as a broad guide the term is not uncontested and some authors see the social economy in much sharper focus as a 'new social economy movement' for gaining economic control 'from below' (Birkhölzer 1996:42) or as part of developing 'an independent parallel economy' (Douthwaite 1996:360). Here the range of organisations admitted within the term is instead concentrated on social, or community, enterprise organisations with a more local base.

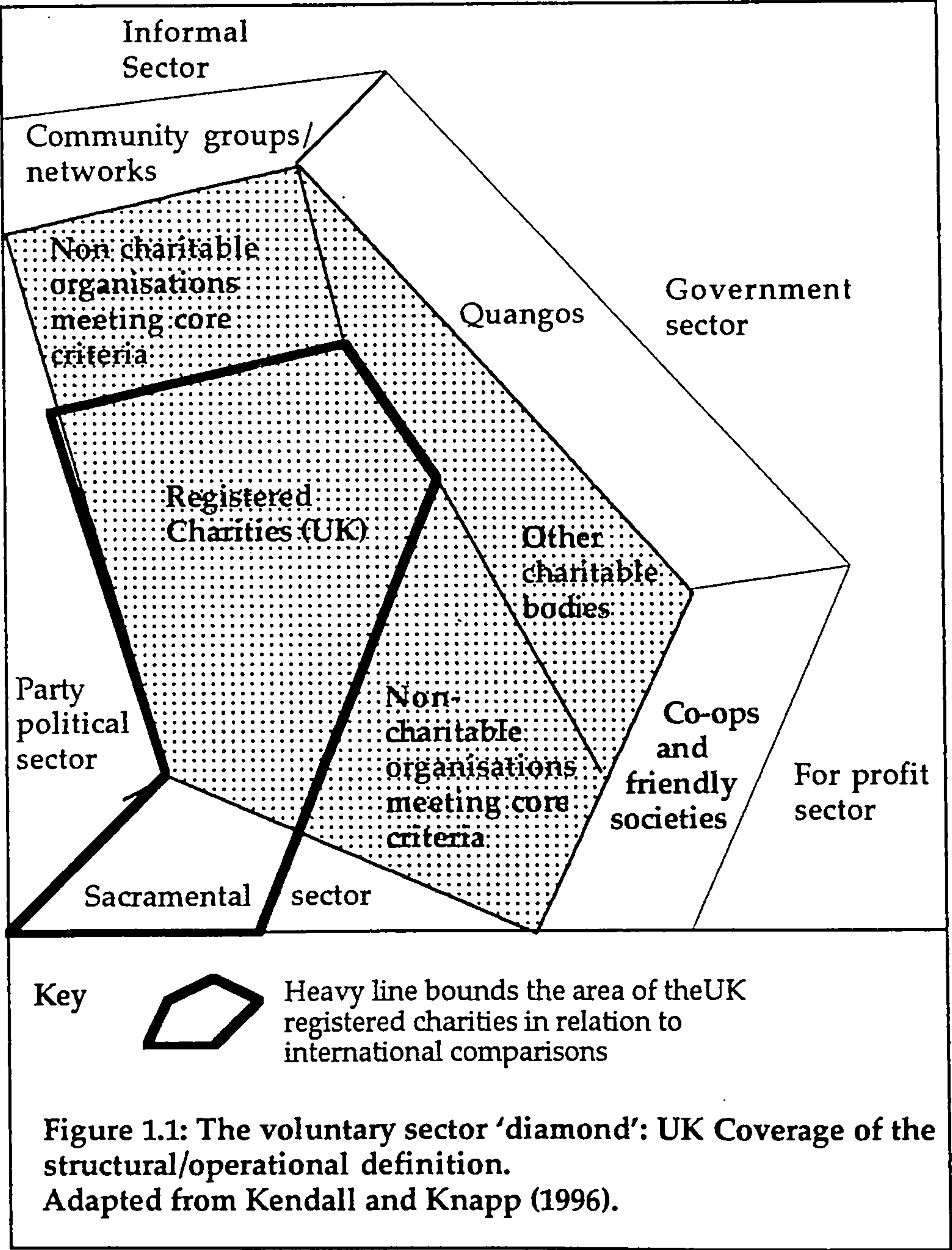
The social economy is often co-terminous with the 'third sector' which can be seen as a 'residual conception' to include organisations that are neither government nor business (Paton 1992:4). Six, perhaps leaning more to the charitable members of this group, sees that term as denoting an arbitrary, temporary, conceptual frame which is simply a different way of characterising the policy/provider division of the welfare state (Six:1994a:403; 406-7). The fact that the increasing size of the voluntary sector part of the social economy is partly, if not wholly, due to transfers of undertakings from statutory to voluntary sector providers (see Kendall and Almond 1998:9) lends some weight to Six's assertion.

1.2.2 Conceptions of the Social Economy

Billis (1989) provides a most simple conceptual picture of the interrelation between the private, public, and third sectors, with his picture of three main overlapping circles representing government, business and associations, with the social economy operating at the intersections. Six (1994:404) is critical of such three sector schemas for focusing on the structural properties of organisations rather than the activities in which they engage. He would no doubt be critical for similar reasons of the more complex diamond shaped variant for classifying organisations proposed by Kendall and Knapp (1996) in figure 1. However such conceptualisations can be useful. Firstly, they help by illustrating that, for example, UK definitions of charitable organisations are nationally specific. The universe of organisations, as defined by their structure, could be divided up in different ways. Secondly, in attempting to make international comparisons, they suggest that co-operatives and mutuals may be seen to occupy neighbouring territories. Rochester and Billings' (2000) exploratory work illustrates this tendency to re-group organisations. They suggest a configuration that has the 'community sector' as including both small community organisations and certain co-operatives but excluding large well resourced voluntary organisations. Their aim here was to group together organisations with similar characteristics and activities rather than common legal structures.

By using Kendall and Knapp's diamond the sub-set of organisations to be examined could be better understood. For example, the social economy sector can be seen to extend

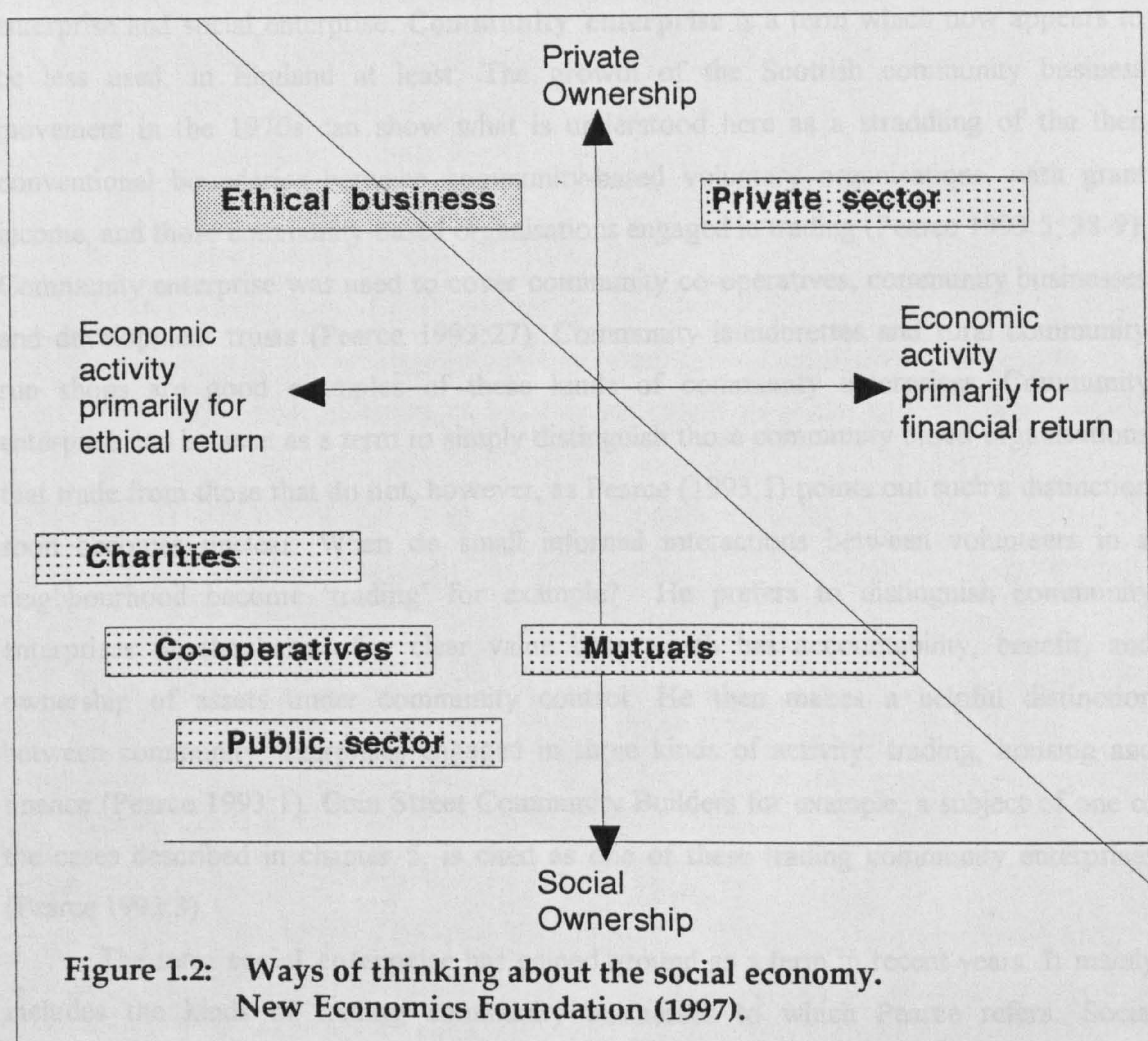
beyond the boundary of the UK registered charity sector 'northward' to include many organisations meeting the core criteria of the voluntary sector but not registered as charities (many campaigning organisations fit here) and further into parts of the informal world of volunteer-run and managed community groups. To the 'east' the social economy colonises the co-operative and mutual world of friendly societies but stops short of the for-profit sector. To the 'west' the world of political organisations provides the boundary.



A different conception comes from the New Economic Foundation's (1997) schema (see figure 1.2) which suggests a framework for locating social economy organisations in relation to other sectoral organisations and markets. It asks us to consider, on the horizontal axis, organisations grouped by whether economic activity is mainly for financial

or ethical return. The vertical axis contrasts the degree of ownership as either private or social. This groups both private sector organisations and ethical businesses together above the horizontal axis, emphasising that they share the feature of private ownership. It places ethical businesses, however, in the left hand quadrant to reflect that their activities are aimed at ethical return. Mutual organisations straddle the boundary of whether returns are primarily financial or ethical to illustrate the range of different organisations contained in this category from, say, credit unions to the left, to large national mutual assurance societies to the right. Charities and co-operatives are grouped close together in the 'ethical financial returns' and more 'social ownership' quadrant. I would argue however that the placing of charities and co-operatives should be reversed, with co-operatives closer to ethical business and charities closer to the public sector.

This diagram is helpful in several ways. Like Kendall and Knapp's schema it suggests that within any grouping of organisations, for example charities, there is divergence within the 'family.' Some of these organisations more resemble co-operative trading organisations whilst others more resemble public sector organisations.



In considering the range of organisations to be studied, the diagram provided a possible way of examining organisations by considering a spectrum where they could be considered as operating closer or more distant to the commercial markets of private sector corporations (whether ethical or not). This led to the question of what constraints on their values different social economy organisations might face according to their location as close to either predominantly public or private markets. This question is pursued further in chapter 3 when research methodology is discussed.

Through these schemas we can locate the term 'social economy organisation' as occupying a territory somewhere between public and private sectors but with blurred borders. This is a convenient place to turn to examine the narrower, but also not unproblematic, term of 'social enterprise organisation.' These can be placed straddling across part of the co-operative and charitable sectors but more in the former than the latter.

1.2.3 Community Enterprise and Social Enterprise Organisations

Contained within the idea of the social economy are the notions of community enterprise and social enterprise. **Community enterprise** is a term which now appears to be less used, in England at least. The growth of the Scottish community business movement in the 1970s can show what is understood here as a straddling of the then conventional boundaries between community-based voluntary organisations, with grant income, and those community-based organisations engaged in trading (Pearce 1993:5; 38-9). Community enterprise was used to cover community co-operatives, community businesses and development trusts (Pearce 1993:27). Community launderettes and rural community run shops are good examples of these kinds of community enterprises. Community enterprise can be seen as a term to simply distinguish those community based organisations that trade from those that do not, however, as Pearce (1993:1) points out such a distinction soon becomes unclear. When do small informal interactions between volunteers in a neighbourhood become 'trading' for example? He prefers to distinguish community enterprises on the basis of a clear value base which has accountability, benefit, and ownership of assets under community control. He then makes a helpful distinction between community enterprises engaged in three kinds of activity: trading, housing and finance (Pearce 1993:1). Coin Street Community Builders for example, a subject of one of the cases described in chapter 5, is cited as one of these trading community enterprises (Pearce 1993:3).

The term **social enterprise** has gained ground as a term in recent years. It mainly includes the kinds of trading community businesses to which Pearce refers. Social Enterprise London (SEL) gives examples of social enterprises as being 'co-operatives,

credit unions, community businesses, intermediate labour market training projects providing training and employment, and trading networks such as LETS' (SEL 1999:5). It should be noted that email discussion lists in the co-operative sector, such as Co-opNet¹, reveal some periodic resentments about what is seen as a rebranding of co-operatives as social enterprise. Some object on the grounds that co-operatives are part of an international movement with agreed values and a distinct identity² while social enterprises are a much more amorphous group.

More rigorous attempts at definitions have come from a team of European academics who have drawn up a nine part specification to encapsulate the requirements sought from a social enterprise, with five economic and four social indicators (Defourny and Borzaga 2001). These economic indicators ask whether the organisation: is trading by goods or services; has autonomy of governance; holds a significant level of economic risk; and offers some amount of paid work. The social dimensions cover initiatives that are: launched by a group of citizens; have decision-making not based on capital ownership; offer a participatory style; have little or no profit distribution; and have explicit community benefits. Such a specification draws in much of Pearce's notion of a community enterprise, it would include SEL's organisational examples, but would exclude many charities. We can locate social enterprise organisations then as a sub-set of any broader social economy definition and such organisations are encompassed within this research.

1.2.4 A Pragmatic Approach to Definitions

To some extent the social economy is a 'chaotic conception' in Sayer's terms (2000:19) - so broad as to be liable to generate meaningless generalisations. In that sense so is 'the private sector.' In this respect it is relevant to ask to what extent the organisations within the social economy have anything in common for the purpose of study? Wittgenstein's (1976: sec 67, 32e) theory of family resemblances is helpful on this question. We can imagine members of a large extended family. They perhaps have no single physical feature in common yet we may notice the nose of one cousin resembles that of an elder aunt, the lips of one grandfather are similar to a grandson and so on. There may however be little in common between everyone in the family. So, as regards organisations assigned to the social economy within the EU definition, we must, recognise this lack of homogeneity and choose organisations carefully to ensure we are not making false comparisons.

For the purpose of this thesis, the broad EU definition is taken as sufficient to encompass social economy organisations as a class while actually a much tighter grouping

¹ co-opnet-on@totalcoverage.co.uk

² I am grateful to Kate Whittle from Mutual Aid and a consultant in the co-operative sector for this insight.

within this whole is to be examined. The NEF diagram is drawn on to contrast the different market locations of organisations which are voluntary or co-operative. The ideas from Pearce (1993), Birkhölzer (1996), Defourny and Borzagain (2001) are then used. The term 'the social economy' usefully conveys a picture of organisations actively engaged with social goals, even if through economic means, whilst distinguishing them from purely commercial organisations. For the purposes of this study it enables a group of organisations (for example charities, trading voluntary organisations and co-operatives) to be considered alongside each other for consideration of a shared organisational issue: the reproduction of their values.

1.2.5 Why are Social Economy Organisations Important?

Social economy organisations and the reproduction of their values are important for two main reasons. Firstly, the strength of civil society both democratic and economic is often connected with the vibrancy and size of the non-governmental sector, an idea often associated with the work of Putnam (1993). Indeed this point has been used as an argument for increased funding of community resource organisations (Ashman, Brown and Zwick: 1998). Both Putnam (1993) and Korten (1990) see voluntary organisations in particular as important contributors to civil society while Darhendorf (2001) has complained that the closeness of large voluntary organisations to government may threaten their roles as social critics. How these organisations reproduce their organisational values, and maintain themselves as value based organisations, may have important implications then not just for this sector but the wider civic society. However, our understanding of how they maintain themselves as value led is still underdeveloped.

Secondly, the role of social economy organisations in creating employment in an increasingly globalised economy has been recognised at a European level. A Eurostat survey from 1991 suggested a total of 5,254,000 people employed across the European Union in the social economy sector with 63% employed by non-profit organisations and 33% by co-operatives (EC 1997:10). The European Commission's findings suggested that between 1980 and 1990 in France the sector counted for one out of every seven jobs created and in Germany, one out of every eight or nine (EC 1997:9). More recent research found 6.3% of the UK workforce is employed in the voluntary sector as broadly defined (Kendall and Almond 1998). Increasing attention then is being paid to the sector for its wider economic and social role. Regardless of the exact conceptual boundaries between sectors these kinds of organisations, as Six (1994:407) himself concedes, will continue to exist and play an important societal role.

1.2.6 What are Organisational Values?

A preliminary view is offered here concerning organisational values which is then developed further in the next chapter. It is likely that all organisations have value bases, in the commercial, public and third sector. These may be tacit or articulated beliefs about the organisation: what it should do, how it and its members should behave and what kinds of things it believes in. These values may be recognised, acknowledged, acted out, or responded to in varying degrees by organisational members and outsiders.

The extensive literature on organisational culture often stresses the importance of strong and clear values which has led to a tendency for organisational values to be reified, just as organisational culture has been, at times, by writers such as Peters and Waterman (1995:11). From such a viewpoint values are seen as objects possessed by an organisation, perhaps controlled and inscribed from above, captured easily in mission statements and transmitted to new recruits. This kind of picture of organisational values is perhaps evidence of a management-centric view of organisations critiqued by writers such as Alvesson and Willmott (1996) and organisational anthropologists such as Wright (1994:2-4). Such a picture fails to take account of the way values are negotiated and contested across, up and down, and outside the organisation and that they may be in need of exploration rather than simple articulation.

Organisational values are not just embodied in what people say but in what they do. Further we are unlikely to be able to articulate all of the values we hold. Polanyi (1975:41-44) and later Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995:59) describe this as the tacit realm: we know more than we can explain about what we do. The written or articulated statements of values should then be starting rather than end points.

It is also important to distinguish different types of organisational values. There are **process values** which are embedded in the way of doing the work. Such process values might be noted in staff working together within an equal opportunities framework, or in a co-operative working arrangement. There are also **product values** where the values are embedded in the outcome of the work. This could be the delivery of an ethical fair traded commodity or in maintaining supported housing for people recovering from substance misuse. Many organisations have both process and product values. An example here would be a worker co-operative (implying process values) involved in wholesale distribution of fair traded goods (implying product values). Another would be a women's collective (process values) refurbishing tools and sending them to developing countries (product values). Thomas's research on the effects of technology implementation in worker co-operatives distinguishes product and process values (Thomas 1990:314). He pointed out that in a printing co-operative values are not embodied in the product arising from the

printing operation but in the democratic organising process. By contrast, in a children's charity, values of justice, care and equalities may be inextricably bound into the way of delivering the service, or product. I make use of this distinction later in this study.

Batsleer distinguishes different types of values which are now summarised (Batsleer 1996:59). He cites **personal or individual values** (we could think of honesty or politeness as examples here); **behavioural values** (like caring, being assertive or skill sharing); **process orientated values** concerned with how people work together (valuing diversity for example); **instrumental values** (such as being efficient); **social values** (concerned with society and its institutions and involving justice, fairness, or equity); and **ideological values** (concerned whether society should be organised on collectivist or individualist lines). We should note here how values sometimes overlap categories (skill sharing could be a behavioural, process -orientated or even an instrumental value. Further, we need to note Thomas is using the term 'process values' in a different way to Batsleer's 'process orientated values.'

In this study Batsleer's 'social values' have been adapted and termed '**social progress values**³' to avoid any confusion with those values associated with individual social behaviour. Social progress values are seen as associated with seeking some variety of social change broadly defined. Such values might be 'working with trust and dignity toward street homeless people' or 'anti-racist working practices' or 'providing quality healthy GM-free food' or 'building quality social housing'. These examples are used deliberately to point to the way that these **social progress values** might additionally be **either process or product values**. The first two can be viewed as process values the last two as product values

We should also be aware of different levels of adherence across the organisation to any particular identified organisational values, and for many good reasons. Some people may feel marginalised and isolated by an organisational ethos on grounds of race, or gender or culture. Mintzberg (1983:246) discusses how dominant influencers in an organisation have more power to impose their values within the organisation. Weick's (1995:99) adds to this by suggesting values are part of the meaning system in an organisation, one of the ways we make sense of what is going on. Other authors have also pointed out that power relations exert their influence over the defining of organisational meanings (Czarniawska-Joerges 1989:139).

1.2.7 Why are Organisational Values Important?

Many of the terms we use which relate to values in organisational discourse, such

³ I am grateful to Jeff Hearn for this term after his helpful comments on my paper at the Dilemmas in Public Management Conference, University of East London, 4-5.9 2000.

as mission,' 'visions,' 'tablets of stone,' 'the message,' have origins in faiths and it is sometimes useful to be aware of this borrowed language (Du Gay 2000:67). Arguably, some of the earliest value-based organisations, in the sense used here, were of religious origin. They have undergone processes of successive growth, decline and reinvention, with adaptations to both their dogma and practices, and have developed techniques to recruit and induct new recruits. One contemporary sociologist has critically mapped the development of one recent attempt at regeneration, the Christian house church movement in the UK, (Walker 1989) and Jeavons has written on management within the values climate of Christian service organisations with close links to the voluntary sector (Jeavons 1994). Other authors suggest organisations themselves can be understood as 'flights from our own mortality' where by joining others with a 'set of shared norms, beliefs, ideas, and social practices, we attempt to locate ourselves in something larger and more enduring than ourselves' (Morgan 1986:213). These ideas are not pursued in this research but do indicate some of the antecedents to the themes of growth, decline and regeneration, the adaption of values in new contexts, and the nurturing of new recruits, which are all present in this study but within secular organisations with very different ideological assumptions.

The kind of social economy organisations considered here are not 'cloister' style missionary organisations, in Mintzberg's (1983:382) terminology, which isolate themselves from the social world to nurture a given cause. They are 'reformers' which have external goals and, in Selznick's terms, face the dilemma between 'extinction and irrelevance' if they stay too far outside society - or 'co-option' if they come in too far in (Mintzberg 1983:379). The idea of any organisation being literally 'outside' society is problematic, of course, but the tension between co-option and irrelevance Mintzberg and Selznick point to is real enough. This study considers how far organisations face this kind of dilemma not just towards state co-option but also towards co-option into commercial markets.

For voluntary and charitable organisations in the third sector the issue of organisational values is often felt acutely, for, as Drucker puts it: 'what's the bottom line when there is no bottom line' (Drucker 1994)? Sometimes organisational values have been placed where the profit motive is in commercial organisations. This can be a dangerous procedure with ideological battles sometimes overwhelming an organisation to the point of collapse (Landry 1985). However, practitioners within the not-for-private-profit sector often claim there is 'something distinctive' about the way they manage and organise which they have identified with their organisational values. This has often been difficult to pin down, as Paton and Cornforth (1992:37) have pointed out. Values are important in all organisations but for voluntary organisations they are at the heart of the matter because 'many of these organisations exist in order to express and promote particular values'

(Paton with Edwards:1995:40).

The account discussed here is largely a 'socially embedded' notion of the place of values in voluntary organisations (Paton 1999:139). Values are seen as 'contested and contingent' and arising from multiple sources, including staff, boards, social movements and the organisational environment - within which is included funding bodies or commercial markets. Management in social economy organisations is therefore not easy. Paton and Cornforth (1992:43-44) identified six factors of difference for managers in the sector which although not necessarily singularly unique, may, by their combination, make for a qualitatively different task for social economy managers. Two of these factors have a particular bearing on this study. One is the 'managing of social goals' which can make prioritising much harder - and a second is a 'way of doing things' or culture that emphasises value commitments and participatory democratic decision making'.

Values dilemmas are an important part of organisational life. A charity in receipt of a government contract may become involved in intrusive monitoring of a disadvantaged group. Obtaining funding to meet the needs of a specific needy group may require a charity to narrow the range of beneficiaries served. Providing co-operative housing for low income groups may be endangered by lack of commercial viability. A worker co-operative must balance greater investment on organisational processes against economically productive work. These four scenarios are not accidental - they represent dilemmas described by people active in some of the case studies described later in this study. These are the typical kinds of occasions when organisational actors may engage in contests and debate that may occupy a small range of colleagues, a department, a whole organisation or even groups beyond the organisation. They are situations where a conflicting range of values may be invoked in decision making.

How these crucial organisational values are reproduced is then a crucial issue for the sector. Without a way to maintain their values trading style organisations may 'degenerate' as Webb suggests they would (Webb 1930:148). This is not however an inevitable pattern as some authors have pointed out (Cornforth, Thomas, Lewis and Spear 1988:198). The other danger, for voluntary organisations, is that they may ossify, becoming what Milofsky (1997:261) describes as 'traditional organisations' which cannot be allowed to die because they are 'too important as a symbol for the culture and society.' They may have been associated with some early social development but have lost all sight of their original purpose.

To what extent will social economy organisations face threats to their values due to the shifting boundaries between sectors discussed earlier? Have they already been diverted from important roles as advocates, critics, instigators of social inventions, carriers of social

movements, to becoming the longer and more flexible arms of government or commerce? It is important not to be either overly romantic or idealistic about what roles third sector organisations have played or how independent or radical they have been. Six, for example, asserts the 'independence of the voluntary sector has been exaggerated and its distinctiveness needs to be reappraised' (Six 1994:403).

The importance of this area of study has emerged through the professionalisation of the management of the sector. Dartington (1992) urged caution on this theme, fearing the emergence of a new class of expert managers of highly successful organisations out of touch with users. But the theme remains contemporary. Lilley (1999) investigated management practice in information processing work in campaigning, fundraising and employee owned organisations. He concludes that there was an unhelpful degree of mimicry of business approaches, with alternative practices being scarce. His work alerts us to the presence of what institutionalist writers, such as DiMaggio and Powell (1991:67), refer to as mimetic isomorphism, where organisational practices are copied across organisations. Lilley calls for further research into appropriate management processes to enable 'non-conventional organisations' to 'maintain their special status.'

A contemporary view from the commercial sector however points to the overall importance of values linked to culture within the organisation. The government publication 'Competitiveness through Partnerships with People' identified a strong culture as one of five key factors important for business success. Under the heading: 'Shared culture: agreed values binding us together' this factor is elaborated by a description of how 'shared and common values create the culture of the enterprise' (DTI and DfEE 1997). During this research I questioned Dave Francis, one of the contributors, on the applicability of this approach to not-for profit organisations. He outlined a difference between the commercial and not-for-profit sector in that there was often more clarity and more diversity in a commercial sector organisation. When profit seeking is the bottom line, the overarching value and belief system is clear, which can mean that beyond this there is significant organisational space to do other things. He felt that the values issues in a national children's organisation where he had recently undertaken consultancy were far more wide ranging and complex.⁴

1.2.8 Theorising about Organisational Values

Within the academic literature comparatively little has been written directly on values in the social economy with Paton (1996; 1999) and Jeavons (1992; 1994) constituting some notable exceptions. This may imply that the concept is integrated within

⁴Conversation with Dave Francis, CENTRIM, University of Brighton, 31.7.99

other aspects of organisational thinking and is not a separate object for study. Indeed it has been suggested to me that the extensive literature on 'goals' contains much on this theme.⁵

A starting point for thinking about organisational values and beliefs is to examine their place in the organisation for practitioners. Handbooks for managers in the voluntary sector will often frame issues of values and beliefs in a hierarchical model. In this linear approach we have the values, beliefs or mission of the organisation at the top of the tree followed in turn by main organisational aims, then objectives, and finally targets. This is a procedure often followed in organisational evaluation, review and strategy development processes. I have led such processes myself and have found it a helpful framework for clarifying organisational issues. Variants of this practical approach can be found in Hudson (1999:99-120) and Adirondack's (1998:58) guides for managers of voluntary organisations. Gaventa (1990s undated) describes a similar process in his work on participatory empowerment zones for poor and excluded people in the American Appalachian communities. The process starts by asking community groups to discuss their vision and goals, it then asks them to look for indicators of success, and then which methods could be used to collect information relevant to such indicators. This is then followed by an analysis by the groups which then informs further action. Other authors, examining family based firms, suggest delineating organisational values through reflection and discussion. The clarifying of such statements may itself be part of the process of reproducing values within the organisation (Dumas and Blodgett:1999:219). While these schemas and techniques are helpful in the field they do not go far in developing an understanding of organisational values or the reproductive processes.

The difficulty of such practical approaches for this study was that it was anticipated that values would be embedded at every layer of decision making and practice and in the way people do things. Values were not expected to be tidily bundled in the daily life of an organisation or in practitioner's minds, but were more likely to be unarticulated or undifferentiated from other aspects of the work and practice.

1.2.9 Organisational Culture

This led to a consideration of the extensive literature on organisational culture in which values play an important role. In examining the way values are managed or reproduced in social economy organisations, we are, as Paton and Cornforth (1992:44) suggested, looking at 'a "way of doing things" or culture that emphasises value commitments.' Similarly Schein sees culture as 'the deeper level of basic assumptions and beliefs that are shared by members of an organisation, that operate unconsciously, and that

⁵ I am grateful to Professor Margaret Harris for pointing this out to me.

define in a basic “taken -for-granted” fashion an organization’s view of itself and its environment’ (Schein 1985:6). He sees values, operating at a less deep level than culture, as ‘manifestations...of the culture but not necessarily the essence of culture.’ Ott concurs that ‘beliefs and values are absolutely central to organisational culture’ and that ‘shared beliefs and values provide the reasons why people behave as they do’ and that ‘cultures are seen to shape both beliefs and values’ (Ott 1989:38, 40).

Earlier the question of power was touched upon when we considered who can influence which are the important values and how they are enacted. This is an important consideration. The degree to which, in some organisations, values are ‘chosen’ by senior managers (defining the mission in the senior staff awayday), inculcated by a variety of organisational processes (induction, training, coaching, awards), and then deployed (with the aim that these may be internalised by staff as their own beliefs) could be seen as a form of social control. Gee (1996:21), for example, suggests that ‘the new capitalism is now quite open about the need to *socialise* people into “communities of practice” that position people to be certain kinds of people.’

Recruitment patterns to social economy organisations may affect matters slightly differently as co-operatives and voluntary organisations often attract people because they share, or think they share, the organisational values. Nevertheless commitment to key values is unlikely to be evenly distributed across any organisation. Restaurant staff at an environmental centre may not be as proselytising about what the organisation believes in as the director of development. The core values ‘tend to be those of the people exercising power’ (Paton 1999:136). However we should also be aware that no organisation of any size is a totality and there are different groups and interests operating within it contesting and arguing values as much as other matters.

1.2.10 Organisational Environments

No organisation exists on an island uninfluenced by its surrounding environment. Third sector organisations frequently have less financial and political power compared to either state or commercial enterprises and this may constrain them with implications for their organisational values. The Institutional theorists are particularly concerned to locate organisations within their environments and seek to understand why many organisations tend to adopt similar internal structures. This has particular interest in this study in terms of how organisations are affected by the dominant market in which they are operating in and how that in turn affects their values.

There is no one unified institutional theory but several strands. Writers such as Selznick (1957, 1966) can be seen as originators of this approach to organisational study,

which places a strong emphasis on studying organisations and their characteristics in relation to their environments (Powell and DiMaggio 1991:12). Selznick's (1966) classic case study of the Tennessee Valley Authority emphasises the vested interests within this quango-like development body which may steer, or subvert, organisational programmes for strategic aims. In an earlier work he pointed out how organisations become institutions - 'to "institutionalise" is to *infuse with value* beyond the technical requirements of the task at hand' (Selznick 1957:17).

A new institutionalism dating from the late 1970s emphasises the environmental embeddedness of organisations in a wider field which encompasses not so much local strategic actors and interests, but a broader and less individualised set of influences. Prominence is given in these accounts to the effect of, for example, professions or peer organisations in the same industrial sector. In this latter account environments are seen as subtle in their effects, 'they penetrate the organization, creating the lenses through which actors view the world' (Powell and DiMaggio 1991:13). Some critics see this approach as reviving an approach which overstates the role of rational organisational actors. They prefer to emphasise the 'collective and cultural character of the development of institutional environments' (Scott and Meyer 1994:4). Institutional accounts can at times be overly deterministic. However, the effect of environments is clearly important and these theorists have given us the useful notions of mimetic and coercive isomorphism (DiMaggio and Powell 1991:66). Organisations may, for example, model themselves on the best practices developed by leaders in their field (mimetic) or under the pressure of, say legislative force (coercive) adopt similar norms and practices to their sectoral competitors. This can be helpful in understanding the effects that market operations and funding regimes have on social economy organisations' internal structures and behaviours with a resultant effect on organisational values.

Environment influences on organisations also include the affect of both social developments and social movements. Social developments which have had a ready impact on organisations are easy to find: the growth in women's employment in the UK during the 1990s, the emergence of 'whistle blowing' as a legitimate activity of employees, and even fashions such as 'dress down Friday' where employees are 'permitted' to dress casually one day in the week. Some social changes can be central to many social economy organisations since these may be the very subject of their organisational purpose. Pertinent here are the changes in family composition and relationship breakdowns which may acutely affect the profile of homeless people for agencies campaigning on those issues. Conversely a growing political acceptance of the idea of sustainability and 'alternative' technology may make formerly radical environmental organisations appear mild and mainstream.

Another consideration here is that social changes have implications for values and mean they are unlikely to be permanently fixed. There are pressures, for example, for the public sector to be more 'entrepreneurial' (du Gay 2000:ix). There are reverse imperatives for commercial organisations to have wider 'visions of the world' whether arising from external pressure groups or from internal notions of aggrandisement (Gee 1996:32). Social economy organisations on the other hand may face pressures to increase income from trading activity (Rosenman 2000; Dees 1998) or engage in competitive contracting processes with the state which, some research suggests, may lead them to resemble commercial providers of services (Mackintosh 1998:238). There have been longstanding fears that the growth in contracting processes may reduce the organisational space and 'slack' (Galbraith 1980:106; Child 1967:15) and hamper the advocacy and campaigning roles amongst charities (Taylor 1990).

1.2.11 Social Movements and Social Developments

It is relevant here to look at the way social movements may affect social economy organisations by reinforcing or undermining their values. Human rights protesters, squatters movements, even vegetarian wholefood eaters, may significantly affect organisations promoting, respectively, children's rights, social housing or healthy ethical eating. Social movements differ from organisations working for social change. Most obviously, social movements are usually characterised by an absence of a clear organisational form. Indeed Melucci describes social movements as invisible networks of small groups sprinkled through every day life. He sees them as operating in a 'pre-political dimension of everyday life' through informal networks in which collective actors 'collaborate in the laboratory work of inventing new meanings and testing them out' (Melucci 1981:222). There is an inter-relation between social movements and organisations and there can be an interpenetration of movements into organisations with significant effect on values. Considered as 'a network of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organizations', to paraphrase Diani (1992:13), social movements can be seen to play this role.

Jeavons pointed out another link to wider movements. He suggested that in acquiring resources, such as donations from the public, legitimacy and credibility are crucial. It is therefore in the interest of not-for-private profit organisations to adopt a wider socially responsible attitude. A US environmental voluntary organisation was criticised by the public when it complained that homeless people were taking the best items from recycling bins thus reducing its income. Jeavons concludes that the public expects voluntary organisations to hold higher standards than commercial organisations and to have

a much wider caring brief in society than their own specific mission. Organisations that act without attention to such perceptions and norms tended to be punished by the general public (Jeavons 1992:408).

1.2.12 Introduction to Reproduction

In considering reproduction it is appropriate to turn to Giddens' structuration theory which emphasises that social reproduction is located within daily practice. 'I wanted to place an emphasis on the active flow of social life...We should see social life as...a series of ongoing activities and practices that people carry on, which at the same time reproduce larger institutions' (Giddens 1998:76). In this view society is reproduced in what people do - including what people say. Giddens sees structuration theory as emphasising that 'the possibility of change is there in every moment of social life, but a key part of social life is social reproduction' (Giddens 1998:89).

Stryjan has made use of some of Giddens' thinking in his work on developing a theoretical framework for the reproduction of membership in self-managed organisations, such as worker co-operatives. Stryjan aims specifically to counter an over dependence on 'structural' mechanisms in co-operatives. He suggests, for example, that structures and constitutional mechanisms in the co-operative movement have enjoyed '...a clear primacy over processes and thus, over members' actions. It emerges out of the blue, to dictate and steer developments, seemingly without being influenced by them' (Stryjan 1989:40). He seeks to reinstate the importance of actors' interactions by a re-emphasis on actor processes. Indeed Mintzberg when asked how goals and values got operationalised answered 'in short, power' from different stakeholders (Mintzberg 1983:20, 26-8). Organisations are different to cultures and social institutions - there is a much more voluntaristic nature to organisations - nevertheless some of this thinking can be of use in this study.

1.3 Themes and Factors Affecting Values: an example

I undertook a short study visit to the Mondragon co-operatives during my research, in April 2000, to orientate myself towards a social economy organisation in a context outside of my own experience in the UK. The thinking that came from this visit is used to highlight some of the important factors to consider in examining organisational values.

The federation of co-operatives in the town of Mondragon, in the Basque region of Spain, now known collectively as the Mondragon Corporacion Cooperativa (MCC) has been a celebrated subject of research and interest (Martin 1998:321; Douthwaite 1996:339;

Rothschild-Whitt and Lindenfield:1982:3; CRU:1982). The MCC now employs over 30,000 people in the manufacture of domestic 'white' goods, luxury coaches, and high tech components for industry. There are also a range of service co-operatives such as cleaning, and associated housing and agricultural co-operatives, as well as the 'Eroski' supermarket chain. There is a health care scheme, a university and a research institute but central to its operation is its bank, the Caja Laboral.

1.3.1 Social Movements

Jose Arizmendiarieta is credited with guiding the social vision behind '**the Mondragon movement**' of co-operatives, which started during Franco's era when workers felt they had 'neither political freedom nor economic opportunity' (Whyte and Whyte 1991:26, 31). This citing of a **movement**, alerts us early on to the presence of some beliefs, commitments and activities extending beyond the organisational framework. Some of these movements were connected with Basque culture. The cultural and political isolation felt after the devastation left by Franco's victory may, for example, have increased the solidarity and motivation amongst the people in the region (See CRU 1982:3-5). There was already a high skill base amongst an industrial workforce, on which the co-operatives could capitalise, but also some organisational expertise. In addition Arizmendiarieta, in the early days, undertook a development process to create a social base which resembles the building of a movement rather than simply an organisation. He established sports activities, parents groups, and worked to set up craft schools. A local ballot asking for support for these schools brought concrete offers from one in seven people in the area and this list formed the early membership of the organisation (Whyte and Whyte 1991:30).

1.3.2 The Place of Ideas and Values in Mondragon

Something of Arizmendiarieta's philosophy is summed up in his belief in the role of reflection and the development of ideas in organisational life:

The world has not been given to us simply to contemplate it but to transform it and this transformation is not accomplished only with our manual work but first with ideas and action plans.

(Arizmendiarieta: undated:35)

The quote above emphasises the action orientation of organisations like the Mondragon co-ops: they are **seeking change, or transformation** in Arizmendiarieta's words, to improve some aspect of the social world. The vital importance of **ideas** behind these action orientations is stressed and suggests that within the notion of 'ideas' we can

also hear the voice of **organisational values**. The level of educational and consciousness raising work (today we might call this capacity building or developing social capital) which was undertaken over a 40 year period by Arizmendiarieta and others may have been a crucial ingredient in the success of the venture (CRU.1982:3-5). Later research on Mondragon's decision making processes in the 1980s suggested at least four basic organisational values were present: equality, solidarity, dignity of labour and participation (Whyte and Whyte 1991:273-4).

Today issues of values may not always be formally high on the agenda. During the study tour I asked Fred Freundlich, our experienced and knowledgeable guide from Mondragon, about this issue. He felt that in some of the co-operatives such discussions could be seen as 'soft' issues with many workers. They might, understandably, be primarily concerned with the 'hard' issues of maintaining the economic prosperity and survival of their co-ops rather than in apparently abstract discussions. Nevertheless the democratic organisational structures, such as the social council, seemed well used and significant in the organisation. In this sense some of the process values may be embedded, enacted and understood through **tacit means** through organising processes but may be less explicitly debated.

1.3.3 Internal Organisational Factors

Some of the factors **internal to the organisation** may affect values and their reproduction. MCC is credited with creating several **social inventions in their organising structures** (Whyte and Whyte 1991:38) and continues to represent an example of an economically successful social economy organisation. One ingredient in this success is seen to be an organisational culture with the flexibility to meet new conditions (Whyte and Whyte 1991:272). Through my questions to Fred Freundlich, I learnt there could be **no absolute constitutional guarantees** of maintaining the co-operative structure although it would be unlikely to be in the members interests to change this. **People** then are important as well as structures. There was, most obviously, the presence at the start of a gifted and inspirational founder and, in the early 1950s, the five who decided to start up the first company (Whyte and Whyte 1991:33). Local factors are cited as applying at Mondragon which had a strong bearing on internal culture. These included the original conditions of austerity, for example, and a strong Basque cultural identity amongst most of the workers which tended to favour co-operative endeavours.

1.3.4 External Organisational Environment

Some features of the environment **external to the organisation** are also of interest

for values. The founding period in the 1940s, in the Franco era following the civil war, presented a **hostile organising environment** for such ventures, politically and economically (CRU 1982:10). However there were simultaneously some **advantageous factors** enjoyed in Mondragon. Solidarity and skill base amongst the populace have already been mentioned as factors but pertinent also was the economic isolation of the Spanish economy which made successful market entry possible (Whyte and Whyte 1991:33). Low labour mobility (CRU 1982:104) may also have been important in enabling the fruition of the very long term investment in both economic and social developments contained in Arizmendiarieta's and Mondragon's approach.

As an organisation the ideas and values of Mondragon are enacted through engagement in commercial market activities. MCC was not immune to new competitive challenges and economic recession in the market, and it initiated organisational restructuring in the 1980s to meet these challenges (Whyte and Whyte 1991:197). Such threats remain contemporary. Although large by Spanish standards Mondragon remains small by international comparisons. This factor is, according to Fred Freundlich, taken extremely seriously for its effect on MCC's competitiveness in a **global market place**.

Mondragon has been established long enough to have attracted critics. Some have questioned the real levels of democratic involvement suggesting 'capital is hiring labour' rather than the other way round (CRU 1982:85-90, 97). The pay differentials between the highest and lowest paid have gradually been extended to reflect the increasing complexity of tasks in a sizable company. This has been strongly criticised in some quarters (Douthwaite 1996: 160-170). These factors could be construed as a variety of **degeneration**. Meister's four phase framework (cited by Cornforth et al 1988:198) suggested a route from initial high idealism, to the beginnings of conventional organisation, and on to a democracy restricted to boards, and finally to loss of all ideals. Mondragon's democracy still extends to elective assemblies and the federated structure permits high levels of local decision making. A simple assessment as to whether organisations like MCC have degenerated in terms of their values remains then a question open to contest and debate.

1.3.5 Summary: Mondragon and Themes Related to Values

The purpose here was not to undertake a detailed analytic case study of the Mondragon co-operatives and which factors have made it successful or otherwise. The aim was, rather, to use this example to illustrate a range of themes pertinent to the exploration of how social economy organisations may reproduce their organisational values and to some of the possible constraints.

Not all of the themes apply equally to all the organisations studied later in this

research. We do not, for example, generally use the term ‘degeneration’ when referring to values with voluntary organisations, and the effects of global markets on charitable income may not be felt so directly but mediated, typically through the medium of state funding. Nevertheless with those reservations in mind the general outline above shows the scope of the research undertaken here. This suggests, firstly, exploring what organisational values are operating in an organisation. Secondly, it involves considering which internal factors may be affecting value reproduction. Thirdly, it suggests examining external factors acting as either pressures or supporters of those values, including markets. This latter part also entails considering the role social movements may play in supporting or inhibiting those organisational values.

1.4 Conclusion

In this chapter the idea of social economy organisations and their values were introduced with a preliminary review of some of the literature relating to the research problem. The example of Mondragon illustrated some factors that could be considered in examining values and their reproduction in social economy organisations. In the next chapter this analysis is deepened by reference to organisational and social theories.

Chapter 2:

Theoretical Considerations

In this chapter some of the theoretical thinking on social economy organisations introduced in the previous chapter is extended. First the ontological and epistemological assumptions of this study are tackled from a realist perspective. Ideas of reproduction are then considered making use of Giddens' structuration theory. Organisational values within the organisation are then examined by reference to two streams of literature: firstly, notions of organisational culture, and secondly, the institutionalists' ideas of organisations as embedded in their environment. A typification of organisational values is offered in conclusion.

2.1 Theoretical Assumptions

Orwell is sometimes credited with the dictum that 'you can try to avoid politics but politics won't avoid you.' This could also be said about the role of theory in social research and for some of the same very good reasons. Social research is inevitably situated in philosophical assumptions about the nature of knowledge and the existence of the social world. These assumptions may be either implicit or explicit but will affect the nature of our research and how we conduct it regardless of our awareness of them. As Bryman says:

Questions of social ontology cannot be divorced from issues concerning the conduct of social research. Ontological assumptions and commitments will feed into the ways in which research questions are formulated and research is carried out.

(Bryman 2001:19)

My aim in the first part of this chapter is to try to be explicit about my exploration of the epistemological and ontological assumptions as far as they affected this investigation. This was not a luxurious excursion from the main study. My research themes on the reproduction of organisational values dispatched me necessarily on this journey. For example, what status do organisational values have? Are they measurable and definable objects of study; socially real phenomena with causal powers; constructions and interpretations by organisational actors; or part of a nexus of contradictory discourses? The

orientation a researcher takes towards those differing responses to the question would have a significant affect on any study examining organisational values. It would affect how to design the research, what to examine, how any data would be analysed and which conclusions it would be possible to draw.

Those four responses to the question on the status of values offer, in the form of capsule sized caricatures, four dominant paradigms of inquiry within social theory: the positivist, the realist, the 'soft' constructivist, and the postmodern or 'hard constructivist' positions. There is inevitably some blurring at the edges along this rather crudely sketched spectrum. The arguments between these positions will not be presented in any detail. General reviews are readily to hand (Smith 1998:281; Bryman 2001:12-13) as are accounts from authors positioned along the spectrum from realism to postmodernism (Hammersley 1992:36-41; Sayer 2000:14-17; Guba and Lincoln 1998:203; Denzin and Lincoln 1998a:27; Bauman 1992:40-42).

My journey during this study was to explore some of these questions in order to inform and enable the research. This meant considering my own position so that the differing social and organisational theories, at grand and 'middle-range levels' (Layder 1998:16) relevant to this study could be confronted. This helped during the research design, data gathering and analysis stages. Sometimes it meant a preparedness to drop the pride born from a hard won understanding and commitment to one position so as to occasionally be prepared to borrow across paradigmatic borders when the pragmatic needs of the research dictated. The idea, for example, of seeing the role of the qualitative researcher as a bricoleur engaged in a craft skill (Denzin and Lincoln 1998:3), was a useful tool borrowed from helpful theoretical neighbours.

2.1.1 The Progress of the Reluctant Constructivist

I noted in my research diary in December 1999. 'I find myself occupying a position as a reluctant constructivist.' Let me explain my reluctant position and subsequent movement.

A **positivist** view would tend to see an organisation, a culture, or values, as objective things, external to the actor, 'having an almost tangible reality' and acting as 'a constraining force that acts and inhibits its members' because organisational actors 'internalise these beliefs and values' (Bryman 2001:17). **Constructivism** offers an alternative position, in which social phenomenon and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors (Bryman 2001:18). In this sense the organisation is in a state of revision and the researcher only presents one possible picture while knowledge is indeterminate. Too objectivist an account overlooks then the way in which actor's

conceptions may affect and create the organisation while a 'hard' constructivist view suggests there are only actor conceptions and no pre-existing order. **The critical realist position** (Bryman 2001:13) differs from positivism in not taking a simple correspondence between a reality, deemed to be external to social actors, and our observations and data. This perspective posits generative factors which may remain unseen but which act as causal mechanisms. Such a perspective seeks to include the 'soft' interpretivist stance which incorporates actors' perspectives and insights. This later view is often associated with Weber's notion of 'verstehen' whereby we seek to understand the world from actors' perspectives (Parkin 1986:19). The critical realist rejects, however, the idealism, in a philosophical sense, of the 'hard' constructivist view which could question the reality of the social world of organisations. This later view is often guilty of committing what Bhaskar calls 'the epistemic fallacy' (Collier 1994:76) which, in finding knowledge about the social world fallible or complex, then doubts the existence of that world. Epistemology is thus confused with ontology.

2.1.2 Objections to Positivism and Constructivism

The positivist position seems discredited by its inability to construe and understand actors' meanings and intentions, limited by the 'social facts' approach of Durkheim. It was hard to see how research into organisational values could proceed without a qualitative interpretation of what actors in organisations felt, intended, misconstrued and contested about their practise. It would be necessary to understand their values at more than an espoused level, using evidence to interpret the degree to which processes might support the reproduction of those values.

The social constructivist approach suggested social actors construct meanings and sense in their worlds, a phenomenological understanding of social reality set out by Berger and Luckman (1966). A 'strong' constructivist view however sat uneasily for me with organisations working for social change. Those organisations are founded on a sense of apprehending and combating injustice such as poverty, racism and homelessness. If we assign such injustices to the realm of socially constructed myths which are arbitrarily held by some social actors but do not refer to real occurrences, if such accounts are *just* discourses and no more, then we surely undermine the point of social change.

This led me to appraise and adopt the realist, and parts of the critical realist position, developed by Bhaskar (1979). Such a position offers an alternative to those who hanker for either 'a law finding science of society modelled on natural science methodology... [or the]...interpretivist reductions of social science to the interpretation of meaning' (Sayer 2000:2-3). This rejects both the naive empiricist view and the 'hard'

constructivist view. It accept the 'soft' constructivist view, that actors are involved in interpreting their own situation (Ackroyd and Fleetwood 2000:8), that meanings are contested, that there are a diversity of perspectives in social settings, that social reality is concept dependent but not concept determined (Sayer 2000:27,34). Such a position is not too distant from Hammersley's (1992:53) notion of 'subtle realism'. This does not imply reality or causal links between phenomena are 'obvious or self-evident or easy to discover' (Easton 2000:207). The reality may be incredibly hard to understand in practise and to uncover causal mechanisms may be deeply complex. This sets out the realist ontology that I have striven to work from in this study.

Having set out the arguments on ontology realists tend to remain more open with regard to theories of knowledge or epistemology (Sayer 2000:32). A basic approach is one that recognises the importance of fallibility - that our knowledge may not be the most adequate reflection of the real and so has to be open to question. If the referents of theories are independent of the world then such theories must be open to question and transformation on the basis of new evidence, and thus realists treat 'all theories as fallible' (Collier 1994:16). Research methods, while not prescribed (Collier 1994:205-6), tend to favour examining natural settings to understand 'the meaning and purposes people ascribe to their actions', to valuing 'discovery as an element of research', with processes of triangulation, and a commitment to the importance and the falsification of hypotheses (Guba and Lincoln 1998b:205). These later questions are developed further in the discussion on methodology in the next chapter.

Organisational studies working from this specifically realist frame of reference have begun to appear (Ackroyd and Fleetwood:2000; Clark:2000). Such currents of thought have sociological roots, according to Ackroyd and Fleetwood (2000:5), in parts of the work of Marx, Weber, and Durkheim, and are close to more recent writers such as Bourdieu and, in organisational studies, to Braverman and Reed. Pawson and Tilley (1997) have usefully applied some of the realist thinking discussed here in their empirical research on crime. Within such organisational studies the notions of multiple and latent causal mechanisms are employed. The critical realists point to the way causal powers in society may remain dormant but still have latent power to influence events. Ackroyd and Fleetwood (2000:13) cite management power in this context as an example of this 'transfactual' action. An example here might be with voluntary organisations where senior managers or boards possess certain powers, which may remain largely unexercised, but which may emerge strongly in a crisis.

2.1.3 Summary of Realist Position Adopted in this Study

In summary this study takes as its theoretical assumptions a broadly realist conception of social phenomenon which draws from Sayer's (2000:11-12) explanation of critical realism and something from Hammersley's (1992:53) notion of subtle realism. It takes a realist ontology and an epistemology which acknowledges the fallibility of theories. Methodologically it is informed by Layder's (1998:133) approach and the empirical research of Pawson and Tilley (1997). In tackling this investigation from a realist perspective credence was to be given to the understandings expressed by organisational actors, to study events and incidents taking place within or around the organisations studied, and to consider the contextual social influences.

2.1.4 Theoretical Views on Reproduction

A theoretical understanding of organisational reproduction will now be developed beginning with some cautionary words. Merton (1967) noted that many sociological theories have a high level of abstraction and are often difficult to employ in empirical research. Giddens' structuration theory is an example here. Merton distinguished between such grand theory and 'theories of the middle range' which, although having more limited applications, would be more useful in research settings. Layder (1998:16) makes similar points. These middle range theories are seen to 'fall somewhere between grand theories and empirical findings' (Bryman 2001:5). Layder interestingly undertook research using Giddens' structuration theory to examine the transition from school to work amongst young people but concluded that the patterns were more complicated than theory predicted (cited in Bryman 2001:6). Porter (1993) undertook a study of racism in NHS hospitals using a critical realist perspective. His study concluded that the structural effects of racism may be masked by professional values and so remain latent, but in a given set of circumstances, might well emerge and generate deleterious effects. Such attempts to directly apply such grand theories are comparatively rare.

In Giddens' (1984) formulation of structuration theory, social and organisational reproductive processes are seen as involving both human agents and structural processes. Explanations need to take account of structural factors (for example class, gender relations, world markets) which have a governing but not completely determining effect on social outcomes, *and*, the way that knowing human agents interact and seek to shape what they want to achieve.

Giddens' structuration theory forms a starting point for understanding how the effects of structures such as markets and quasi-markets (Le Grand 1993) interact with the willed acts of organisations and agents to maintain organisational values. Giddens sees

actors as having a fundamental role in the continuance of structures by continually reproducing them. So Giddens suggests:

...all structural properties [under structuration theory] are the medium and outcome of the contingently accomplished activities of situated actors.

(Giddens 1984:191)

It should be noted here that Archer (1998:369) considers that in one respect Giddens has conflated agency and structure. Archer sees her notions of 'morphogenesis and morphostasis' as close to Giddens' notions of 'transformation and reproduction' both of which 'make sense as processes that come *after* something which existed *before*' (Archer 1998:360). Structure must be pre-existent - the background against which we socially innovate to produce or transform social life. However, for Giddens 'structural properties only become real...when instantiated by actors, instantiation therefore becoming dependent upon current activities which, in turn, depend upon the knowledgeability of contemporary agents about what they are doing' (Archer 1998:362). She suggests then that Giddens' idea of the *necessity* of actors to be engaged in this reproduction overlooks the fact that structures can remain long dormant. They remain present and have the potential to have causal effect even though actors are not active in reproducing them.

To summarise, this study takes as its **theoretical assumption on reproduction** that notions of both organisational structure and the action of actors within the organisation play a role in the reproduction of their values. It is therefore informed at a grand theory level by the structure/ agency work of Giddens (1984) with an awareness of some of the problems outlined by Archer (1998).

2.1.5 Organisations are Different from Society

Care must be taken to not assume an equivalence between the reproduction and transformation of *society* and its institutions and the reproductive and transformational processes of practices within organisation life. The analysis of Giddens is intended to operate at a deeper theoretical level than organisational analysis. However, the endeavour here is to locate the operation of such social reproduction within the more circumscribed realm of organisational life. Organisations are not, on the whole, mini-societies despite the sometimes appealing similarities for organisational analysts. Most notably social institutions do not 'go to sleep' but are prevalent and enduring. For social actors there is no 'holiday' from many of the institutions of social life and few social institutions are as easily dissolved as organisations. Gender relations would be a good example here. Actors in organisations can, however, even in the most workaholic companies, go home, resign or

leave the most persistent organisational ethos while organisations themselves can merge or dissolve.

With these reservations in mind we can proceed, with some care, because there are aspects of social reproduction which can cross the analytic divide and apply to some aspects of the organisation. Organisations are contained within society even while not being identical to it.

2.1.6 Stryjan on the Reproduction of Membership

Stryjan in his work on self-managed organisations has used Giddens' work to develop a middle range theory on the reproduction of membership. By self-managed organisations it is meant those run by their members with worker co-operatives being an obvious example. Structuration theory is used to illuminate how individuals' actions are implicated in the reproduction of organisational practice in such organisations. I first set out the problem Stryjan was tackling and then describe the model.

Stryjan first distinguished the notion of organisational survival from reproduction. Survival is seen as a more prosaic continuation of economic performance while reproduction is a continuance of a particular organisational identity, in this case the notion of self management (Stryjan 1989:117). Reproduction is, in effect, a higher order concept dependent on, but not reducible to, survival. He then considered the argument arising from the degeneration thesis (Cornforth et al 1988:112). Do self-managed organisations tend over time to adapt to the environment in which they are operating and do they adopt practices of their competitors to maximise returns for the likelihood of market success? Such a question leads us back to the work of the institutionalist writers on organisational environments. For a self-managed organisation which is:

....struggling to preserve or spread its identity, successful reproduction presupposes that isomorphic pressures that the environment generates are coped with.

(Stryjan 1989:119)

There are examples of such pressures being resisted. Stryjan suggests the federative strategies (Stryjan 1989:120) developed in Mondragon by the MCC offer one example of 'divergent' organisations affecting the environment to make it more amenable. Here a constellation of similar organisations provide opportunities for building a wider support infrastructure, common trading, know-how, or expertise, than is possible for one organisation alone. This links to Douthwaite's (1996:360) ideas on building a sustainable local social economy through using a variety of mutually supporting techniques such as

LETS schemes, local trading and social economy organisations. Ackroyd (2000:101) pursued this theme in arguing that 'organisations are actively constituted by their members (and may well in many circumstances produce and transform what is external to them).' What is less clear is how or why such examples do occur.

Turning now to the thinking from structuration, Stryjan felt structure and constitutional mechanisms in the co-operative movement had enjoyed:

...a clear primacy over processes and thus, over members' actions...It emerges out of the blue, to dictate and steer developments, seemingly without being influenced by them.

(Stryjan 1989:40)

He sought then to reinstate the importance of actors' interactions by a re-emphasis on actors' processes as well as structural issues. Mondragon is again a useful example here because its participants did not have a grand plan in advance. It 'evolved gradually, nearly accidentally, in a succession of organizational choices and changes' (Stryjan 1989:48). Organisational actors were improvising against an existing background and set of circumstances. For participants, Stryjan suggests:

The participant may...perceive a dynamic, bound by tacit rules of 'proper' development and conduct.

(Stryjan 1989:48)

In this he touched on the dispositions and values of individuals and their effect in steering the organisation on the basis of what they feel is right and proper for that kind of organisation. This is a useful insight for the study of social economy organisations and the role that values may play within their development. This led Stryjan to suggest a simple model to consider reproduction based on members 'designing' the organisation and 'moulding' each other through organisational practises. He suggested firstly, a four part specification for organisations which we can see as boundary conditions for the model that follows. The specification is that: all participants should be members of the concern; all members take part in decision making and implementation; the organisations is self designing and the organisation depends on the members active and continued support (Stryjan 1989:45). This led to a simple model with three specifications for reproducing self managed organisation:

The attachment of members must be maintained; the perspectives for the decision making are based on a value base or world view; the options for formal involvement

remain open and alive to the members.

(Stryjan 1989:45)

Such an account is designed to apply to organisations run by their members, such as co-operatives, however, many voluntary and campaigning organisations are close to this style of organisation and therefore we may imagine the model has some relevance to them as well. Indeed Stryjan considered whether this model may have wider applicability. He suggested we can imagine a spectrum of organisations. At one end would be 'deviant' organisations, such as co-operatives, where attention to reproduction is a high concern. We can also think of many other social economy organisations here. At the other end of the scale would be 'faceless organisations' such as an army of conscripts where the organisational form and rules are highly proscribed by external controls (Stryjan 1989:152).

Stryjan's model of the reproduction of the organisation's membership can be partially applied to voluntary organisations many of which may be allied in terms of having a world view within their value base. A small volunteer campaign group would be near identical to a self-managed group. A neighbourhood community organisation employing 5 staff with a board of trustees and 20 volunteers would closely fit the boundary specifications although certain 'members' have different roles, powers and responsibilities. A charity with 100 staff would still meet some of the specifications although the notion of 'members' would need widening, and potentially diluting, by considering a wider group of stake holders (examples might be senior staff, junior staff, trade union, trustees, volunteers, project users). In such cases the model might still have some applicability.

My intention here was to see if Stryjan's model of the reproduction of *membership* within self-managed organisations could illuminate the path toward the reproduction of *values* in social economy organisations with social change progress values. In narrowing the focus to 'social progress values' the aim is to exclude examination of behavioural values such as 'politeness' or instrumental values such as 'efficiency.' This may be particularly of use in terms of 'agency' factors around organisational actors and values. A helpful start might be then, adapting Stryjan, to consider within organisations: (a) to what extent certain organisational actors remain 'attached' and believe in the values; (b) whether these organisational values are connected to a social progress agenda; (c) whether actors can also engage these values within decision making or influencing processes in the organisation.

2.2 Organisational Values

2.2.1 Can Organisations have Values and are they Positive?

In this section three questions around values and organisations are dealt with before

proceeding to look deeper at values in the context of the management literature. These have all arisen from questions presented to me as a researcher at management studies conferences. Firstly, the idea that organisations have values at all may need to be argued for in some quarters. This argument, from a (philosophically) atomistic disposition, holds that the values of the organisation are the sum total of the values held by all the participants and there are no supra-individual values. A second argument holds that organisational values, if they exist, are simply those subscribed to by the most dominant and powerful people in the organisation. A third argument questions whether organisational values should be seen as positive. My position on these arguments is that I disagree with the first, I have partial agreement with the second, and I am in agreement with the third question. The following discussion shows my reasons.

Organisations do have values and we are aware of this in our daily experience. Organisations are seen as accountable to society, they are in some sense invested with a personality, and are held culpable before the law. Train crashes and chemical spills are examples of situations where a company may be held responsible for wrong actions. Their agents, in the form of senior staff or board members, are held to account for the company's actions. Lorenz argues 'corporate misconduct is not usually the result of individual flaws or problems...' [but] 'more frequently reflects the values, attitude, language and behavioural patterns that define an organizations' operating culture' (cited in Martin 1998:564). The organisation operates at a different level and has different attributes when compared to its individual members. In realist terms this can be seen as a 'stratified ontology' (Sayer 2000:13; Collier 1994:47), where the higher level entity (the organisation) is dependent on lower levels (the individuals within it) but has emergent properties not reducible to it. An environmental activist is dependent on the functioning of her body for existence but explanations of biological nature do not assist us in understanding the higher order of her political arguments.

The following organisational example illustrates these points and several others. Contemporary with the start of my research was the publication of a report on the events surrounding the murder of Stephen Lawrence, a black teenager in London, and the subsequent investigation by the Metropolitan Police. The report is a grim but important illustration of some important facts around organisational identity, organisational responsibility and organisational values. In describing institutional racism the report describes the way organisations are identified as having a responsibility which is more than that of the individuals within it.

The term institutional racism should be understood to refer to the way institutions

may systematically treat or tend to treat people differently in respect of race. The addition of the word "institutional" therefore identifies *the source of the different treatment; this lies in some sense within the organisation rather than simply with the individuals who represent it*. The production of differential treatment is "institutionalised" in the way the organisation operates. [emphasis added].

(Macpherson 1999:6.32 p27)

The authors pointed to the collective failure of the organisation and they also drew attention to the mechanisms by means of which this was enacted at an organisational level by processes, attitudes and behaviour. Indeed this thinking was incorporated into the definition of institutional racism which the authors then used as a way of understanding the evidence heard at the Inquiry:

The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin...detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amounts to discrimination...'

(Macpherson 1999:6.32 p27)

The report concluded that the organisation as a whole exhibited institutional racism. This is not to say that at a policy level this was so, indeed, the espoused policies of the organisation were considered to be quite the reverse (Macpherson 1999: Section 6.24). The espoused values, however, were not necessarily identical to the values-in-use (Argyris and Schön 1978). Additionally it was also not claimed that all, or even a majority, of the force were racist. However the actions of at least some of the individuals within the police force, according to the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police (6.25), were overtly racist. According to the report then, overall, the organisation demonstrated properties and values which were neither congruent with espoused policy, nor equivalent to those of a majority of the officers.

This casts doubt on the atomists' argument. Indeed it could be further argued that an organisation might have institutional racist processes due to unquestioned procedures even though no individual in the organisation intended racism. An example here is a habitual recruitment process by a Birmingham employer which focused on advertising jobs in localities adjacent to the workplace, to enable staff to meet quick call out times. This was found at a tribunal to amount to indirect race discrimination as these adjacent areas had higher white demographic profiles than other areas in the city. No individual racist intent was necessarily argued but the organisational process had a discriminatory effect¹.

However it might still be asserted that dominant individuals have the power to

¹ I am grateful to Olumfemi Hughes for this example.

determine the organisation's values. Indeed Jeavons (1994:61) cites Pfeffer who pointed to how certain individuals come to have more power and influence over determining goals, and we might add values, than others. I partially agree with this objection. My disagreement is that, at the extreme, it can imply an overly rationalistic assessment of actors' intentions and knowledge of their practices. There are several strands to my argument here.

At an individual level, the report shows how some of the failures were due to what Weick (1995) would describe as a lack of 'sensemaking' amongst the officers in charge. They did not 'place an understanding' of race as a possible motive in their murder inquiry (Macpherson 1999: 6.37 p28). There was a sense in which the officers did not 'see' evidence because of institutionalised as well as personal values. There was explicit racism by some officers but my argument here is that the report also shows the operation of a 'tacit' (Polanyi 1975; Nonaka and Takeuchi 1995) organisational value of racism as well. These were values which were in operation, even if not articulated as such, and were located in the processes of people's individual and collective action. Some of the officers were blinded by their habitual racism but this does not imply they were always conscious of this. Had they been so, there would at least have been the possibility of putting aside their racism in their professional duties. As it was they were unable to investigate the murder because they seemed incapable of believing it was racially motivated. This is different to assuming an always intentional conspiracy to use their power to *promote* racism. Of course, regrettably, whether they were always consciously racist or not, the effect on the inadequate murder investigation would probably have been the same.

Senior officers are often rightly seen as having more power and responsibility for the prevailing values embedded in the organisational culture of the organisation. We expect them to take measures to change practices when these are contradictory to the basic aims of their organisation. Undertaking such changes was indeed a recommendation of the Inquiry. We should note, though, that senior managers are not in full control of an organisation's ethos and values due to several factors. Firstly, power may be differentially dispersed through the organisation in different sites. Secondly, the operation of organisational values can also be part of an 'informal organisational culture' in a discussion which draws from some of the Human Relations school of management thinkers (Schwartzman 1993:34). Thirdly, values may be part of a wider social set of dispositions (in this case racism) which is then also present within the organisation. This points to the notion that even senior staff are not necessarily in total command of the overall ethos and the associated organisational values. Fourthly, organisational values are associated with both structural and agency factors within organisations. Taken together these points cast doubt on the positivist project of easily changing or developing organisational cultures and values (see Peters and

Waterman 1995).

This leads us to a third point. We should note that the term 'organisational value' does not necessarily always equate with the normative idea of something good or positive even in the organisation's own terms. In this instance senior officers stated they did not consider racist practice to be either desirable or acceptable.

In summary, firstly, organisations can hold values and these are not related in any simple relation to the numbers of people holding them within the organisation. Secondly, who has the power to assert and determine organisational values remains an important question but it cannot simply be seen as hierarchically determined or rationally encoded. Senior managers do not hold total power to determine values, even when, in cases like this, we might regret this. At the same time managers and staff may hold and propagate values tacitly and unconsciously within their working practice. Thirdly, this example shows that organisational values are not always a 'good thing' even in terms of the organisation itself.

2.2.2 Values and Organisational Culture

The example in the previous discussion leads naturally to a reflection on organisational culture. As pointed out in chapter 1 organisational values appear most frequently within the literature on culture in organisations. Organisational culture is now examined to discuss how this aids our thinking on values, their place in organisations and how this might inform this study. First we need to note some preliminary remarks on organisational culture.

There are multiple definitions of culture. Kroeber and Kluckhohn in a 1952 paper located over 164 definitions (cited by Wright 1998:7). *Organisational* culture, which is my concern here, is hardly less contested with Ott suggesting there are over 70 common words and phrases associated with the term (Ott 1989:52). Smircich pointed out that:

The culture concept has been borrowed from anthropology where there is no consensus on its meaning.

(Smircich 1983:339)

Hofstede sees organisational culture as a 'shared mental software' which is distinctive from the idea of national cultures, because of the much greater degree of voluntarism involved in organisational life, but values are nevertheless seen as centrally implicated (Hofstede 1994:18). Ott included 'values', 'core or basic values', and 'patterned or shared values' as part of organisational culture. He concluded that:

...beliefs and values are absolutely central to organisational culture...[meaning]

essentially the same things in the language of organisational culture as they do in ordinary English.

(Ott 1989:38)

Ott suggests that while there is much disagreement about organisational culture there are five areas which are often shared between writers. These are that organisational cultures are seen to exist, each one is relatively unique, it is socially constructed, it provides a way of making sense of events and symbols, and is a powerful lever for guiding organisational behaviour (Ott 1989:53). However, as Dawson points out culture remains a 'fuzzy term' which is 'not to say that values and beliefs are not important but they're mixed up with other things too' (Dawson 1996:162). Notions of values are then deeply embedded within the idea of organisational culture and cannot easily be seen in isolation from other phenomena.

This is true at an operational level too where 'values, goals, purposes, philosophies beliefs and descriptions get mixed up in organisational statements' (Dumas and Blodgett 1999:216), a view shared by consultants working with not-for-profit organisations (See Hudson 1995). At a day to day level the housing manager, or co-operative development worker, do not go about with a daily mantra of promoting lofty ideals, rather, such values:

...are buried deep in our world-views and emerge in various attitudes to more tangible issues such as the value of democracy, the legitimacy and authority of the state, and the means by which social welfare should be produced and distributed.

(Birchall 1988:59)

Birchall suggests 'values are everywhere, defining the way we interpret the world, they create reality for us' (Birchall 1988:26). In the next section these two accounts of culture are distinguished to show the implications for understanding and studying organisational values.

2.2.3 Culture and Values as Objects

To understand the dominant thinking on values and culture in organisational writing it is necessary to journey back to the 1930s. In opposition to then dominant Taylorist view of organisations at the time, Barnard suggested organisations should have overall goals and purposes which would then be operationalised at a more detailed level by staff. Barnard argued that loyalty to the organisation's cause should be separated from other more technical concerns.

"Loyalty, : "solidarity", "esprit de corps," "strength" of organization... relate to

intensity of attachment to the "cause," and are commonly understood to refer to something different from effectiveness, ability, or value of personal contributions.
(Barnard 1938:84)

Barnard saw the ‘..necessity for indoctrinating those at lower levels with general purposes so that they would remain cohesive and able to make the ultimate detailed decisions’ (Barnard 1938:233). The term ‘indoctrinating’ may read as unpalatable for modern audiences and we might now prefer the politer term ‘socialisation.’ The term was however still used in a recent interview by Schein (see Coutu 2002).

Although Barnard did not use the term ‘organisational values’ and was not writing about not-for-profit organisations, the concept he was reaching for here is not distant from the theme of this study. Selznick developed this thinking and drew a distinction between an organisation and an institution, the latter being seen as ‘infused with values’ rather than a mere technical operational. This leads to the process of organisations ‘institutionalising.’

As an organization acquires a self, a distinctive identity, it becomes an institution. This involves taking on of values, ways of acting and believing that are deemed important for their own sake.

(Selznick 1957:21)

The notion of interest here is the idea that organisational values in such institutions ‘denote something which in the given organization is taken as an end in itself’ (Selznick 1957:57). Organisational *values* are characterised as relatively enduring organisational frameworks and more fundamental than instrumental goals whilst the *ideology* of the organisation has been seen as ‘the set of beliefs shared by its internal influencers that distinguishes it from other organisations’ (Mintzberg 1983:29).

More recently it was Schein who sought to define culture as:

...the deeper level of *basic assumptions* and *beliefs* that are shared by members of an organisation, that operate unconsciously, and that define in a basic ‘taken-for-granted’ fashion an organizations’ view of itself and its environment. These assumptions and beliefs are *learned* responses to a group’s problems of *survival* in its external environment and its problems of *internal integration*.’

(Schein 1985:6)

He went on to suggest they are taken for granted because they repeatedly work. Drawing in values to this account he suggested these operate at a more surface level with culture operating at a deeper analytic level.

This deeper level of assumptions is to be distinguished from the "artifacts" and "values" that are manifestations or surface levels of the culture but not necessarily the essence of culture.

(Schein 1985:6)

The implication of this account, from Barnard through Schein to Peters and Waterman, was the emphasis on defining organisational purpose, culture, and values as a key responsibility of senior staff. Barnard saw the need for senior staff to ‘...inspire personal decision making by “creating faith”...this is the faith in the superiority of common purpose as a personal aim of those who partake in it’ (Barnard 1938:259). This argument appears later in Deal and Kennedy’s work who saw values as the ‘bedrock of any corporate culture’, a ‘*shared* system of beliefs’ [my emphasis] including deep rituals and myths, which they believed were a hallmark of successful companies (Deal and Kennedy 1982:40). Schein also argued that ‘organisational cultures are created by leaders’ and went on to suggest the possibility that ‘the only thing of real importance that leaders do is to create and manage culture’ (Schein 1985:2). Schein, in positivist mood, aimed to provide a workable definition of organisational culture with a conceptual model of how culture worked. Such a model would tell us what culture did, what it was and how culture and leadership were linked (Schein 1985:4).

These accounts are implicitly and sometimes, with Schein, explicitly positivist in their leanings. Schein, for example, takes culture as a property of an organisation and, thus reified, culture becomes an object, a social fact. ‘Culture should be viewed as a property of an independently defined stable social unit’ (Schein 1985:7). As Wright (1994:3) points out Schein wants to be both a positivist (seeing culture as a fixed property) and an interpretivist (seeing culture as ‘thick description’, after Geertz, that needs understanding). Schein’s account while containing much of use offers a limited understanding of the possible explanatory power of organisational culture particularly when considering the participatory ideals of many social economy organisations. Let us now turn to an alternative approach.

2.2.4 Culture and Values as Meanings

Less management-centric and positivistic views are advocated by Alvesson and Willmott who see a kind of ‘value control’ implied by the corporate culture which can ‘portend a more totalisizing means of managerial control’ (Alvesson and Willmott 1996:34). This is a theme taken up by Gee who saw the way that ‘the core values of [companies] create quite different “moral universes”’ aimed at creating the kind of social person the company requires (Gee 1996:21).

Such writers see this approach in modern companies as the ultimate in control -

whereby staff are asked to not only labour hard and long but also to internalise company beliefs. Managers, Alvesson and Willmott (1996:25) suggest, are in this sense, less free even than other employees as there is an implicit code that managers must accept the company line and be deferential which can create considerable dissonance for them. Clearly social economy organisations are not immune to management tendencies of this kind too, however we might ask whether social progress values are more positively and voluntarily held for many joining such organisations.

Anthropological accounts tend to see organisational culture not as a constant but as a something that needs interpreting. Smircich's concern was to explore at least some of the different approaches to the use of culture in management studies and link them to appropriate research strategies. She identified an approach which draws from the anthropological notion of culture as a system of 'shared symbols and meanings'. In organisational theory this is represented, Smircich suggests, by the notions that organisations are maintained through symbolic modes, including language, that '...facilitate shared meanings and shared realities' (Smircich 1983:342). She goes on to argue, citing Opler, that this approach leads to an interpreting of understandings 'declared or implicit, tacitly approved or openly prompted that orient and stimulate social activity.' The implication for research here is for an approach requiring the researcher to gather evidence on the way actors themselves construct their meanings, 'articulating the recurrent themes...that specify the links among values, beliefs and action in a setting' (Smircich 1983:342).

Weick (1995) also talks of organisational actors 'making sense' of their environment through a meaning system in which values are an integral part. Through this account 'enactment' becomes important: humans create the environment and the system adapts - rather than reacting to an environment they 'enact' it (cited in Dawson 1996:98). Such cultural accounts are helpful here because they see values and beliefs in organisations as helping to construe the world through the lens of the organisation. 'Sense making' is seen as a social rather than an exclusively individual process which involves 'shared meanings sustained through the development of a common language and everyday social interaction' (Walsh and Ungson cited in Weick 1995:38).

2.2.5 Towards a Definition of Organisational Values

Overall convincing definitions of organisational values are hard to find. I believe this is because organisational values are either seen as bound up with goal, missions and culture or, as Ott says, the notion is used as it would in everyday life so definitions are not seen as necessary. McEwan suggests values can be seen as:

...the principles or standards that people use, individually or collectively, to make judgments about what is important or valuable in their lives.

(McEwan 2001:46)

This is a helpful starting point if rather broad for the study here. It is focused on individual values, values of many different kinds, and does not emphasise the particular context within which social economy organisations are operating. For these reasons set out in figure 2.1 at the end of this chapter is a typification of factors relating to organisational values that are important for this study. This could serve to construct a framework for understanding organisational values within the local context of social economy organisations.

2.2.6 Summary of Approaches

Organisational culture perspectives tend to a more constructivist stance towards organisations. The 'soft' constructivist parts of these accounts are helpful in forming an approach to researching organisational values. Such accounts can remain consistent with a realist ontology if they reject the extreme of considering organisational life as simply discourses. My approach then was to reject a positivist orientation that saw organisational culture and organisational values as easily 'read off' from the organisation in any straightforward way or even inscribed and then transmitted by organisational leaders. Rather, the view taken here was that actors' meanings were an important part of construing their organisational world. At the same time this does not commit us to a view that says there are *only* a variety of interpretations - the 'hard' constructivist view which would commit us to an irrealist conception of organisations.

2.2.7 From Culture to Context

In chapter 1 Paton's 'socially embedded' view was discussed one of the ways of looking at the roles of values in voluntary organisations. Such an account views values as 'fluid, contested, contingent, problematic, potentially oppressive or a mask of interests' (Paton 1999:139). Values here come from 'funders, professional and other staff, social networks and movements, institutional environment.' He cautions that the manner of 'values being enacted in any lively organization will always, and rightly, be subtler and richer than those magnificent specimens captured and mounted in the display cases of mission and value statements' and that values need to be 'kept alive by critical dialogue and discussion' or they will become rigid (Paton 1999:139). As other commentators have pointed out organisations cannot be seen as 'static' but as dynamic (Dawson 1996:162).

Paton (1996:38) argues that 'some inconsistency between values and action is inevitable' - they can be important in influencing organisational behaviour even if they do not and cannot determine it in the short term or in every case.

An interesting development on these ideas on contestation comes from Ackroyd's ideas on disobedience in organisations. Building on structuration theory he points out how organisations are robust and 'buffer and absorb the contestation' of agents within them (Ackroyd 2000:98). He argues that organisations entail inevitable amounts of dissent but this leads, paradoxically, to a kind of integration. The partial acceptance of dissent within organisations means that although people may be pushed to the edge they can still remain within the organisation. This containment acts as a kind of accommodation reinforcing the sense of an organisation to which they belong. He goes on to suggest that the accommodation of such 'dissent from organisational regimes' is an important key to an organisation's stability and social reproduction (Ackroyd 2000:102).

2.3 Organisations and their Environments

In this section theoretical thinking concerned with the environment organisations operate in, and inter and extra-organisational processes of communities of practice and social movements, are examined.

2.3.1 Environments

How do markets affect an organisation's culture and values? It was Lawrence and Lorsch (1967:156) who, with the arrival of 'contingency theory', considered the affect the external environment has on the organisation. Their study suggested organisations adopted internal structures appropriate to the kind of market they were operating within. They also suggested that sub-units within organisations in highly changeable environments might need ordering differently with higher degrees of 'internal differentiation' (Morgan 1986:54). They famously cited processes found in the plastics industry in the mid 1960s where a highly changeable market with lots of turbulence, had led to structures which tended to be less mechanistic, less rule bound and with less vertical hierarchies.

Their work was built on by Burns and Stalker's (1961) study which had reached similar findings. They had compared industrial settings with stable environments such as Rayon mills (which had more 'mechanistic' management arrangements and protocols) with electronics industries (which in highly changeable fields had developed 'organic' management). This 'organic' style entailed many meetings, flatter hierarchies and is best represented by the project teams and matrix style of organisations discussed by Handy

(1985:193). This approach is seen as typical in sectors where it is necessary to 'invent both products and markets' (Morgan 1986:51). Social economy organisations involved in pioneering work, 'reforming organisations' with wider aims than their own organisation, are often in this position (Mintzberg 1998:366). We might expect to see evidence of this in organisations examined in this study. Moss Kanter calls these 'integrative' rather than 'segmentalist' organisations (Moss Kanter 1983:27) with Child (1988:16) suggesting increasing organisational size leads to a segmentalist approach.

Overall the degree to which internal organisational structures and processes in social economy organisations are easily 'open' to being affected by the environment is an important question (Jeavons 1996:66). Particular structures and ways of working may be quite core to the central concerns of such organisations whether they are the 'cloister,' 'converters' or 'reforming' style of organisations identified by Mintzberg (1983:378-382). The **reformers** have an external goal and engage with society but face the dilemma between 'liquidation and isolation' Mintzberg (1983:381). The former occurs if they get too close to society, and the latter if they stay too far outside. **Converters** seek to gain members and convert them to a new way of life. **Cloisters** are those that turn inward such as very isolated religious sects like Goffman's notion of the closed institution. The main organisations we are concerned with in this study are akin to the 'reformers.'

The effect of the environment is a prominent theme of institutional theorists. Selznick (1966) and later institutional writers (Scott and Meyer 1994) studied the organisation as located in its environment. This can include the effect on organisations of the markets they are situated within, and their location in industrial sectors, as well as organisations' responses to competition with other organisations and the effects of professionalisation. The institutionalists are particularly important for this study in that they seek to understand the mechanisms which might operate leading to organisations adopting similar structures or procedures. The notions of coercive, mimetic and normative isomorphism, cited in chapter 1 are of interest here. Coercive isomorphism is seen as arising from political pressures and the need for legitimacy; mimetic isomorphism arises from responses to uncertainty; and normative isomorphism stems from professionalisation processes (DiMaggio and Powell 1991:67). Isomorphism is best seen as 'a constraining process', a tendency to homogeneity as organisations facing the same environmental conditions tend to resemble one another (DiMaggio and Powell 1991:66). This may help us to consider the way market location might act as a pressure on both organisational processes and organisational values.

Scott and Meyer made some suggestions as to thematic agreements across different institutional accounts. Firstly, they suggest structures and routines inside organisations are

seen as 'direct reflections and effects of rules and structures built into (or institutionalised within) wider environments' (Scott and Meyer 1994:2). One example here would be the way accounts and budget procedures in charitable organisations are broadly similar and coincide with requirements of tax offices and regulatory bodies.

Secondly, because organisations are dependent on the structures evident in these wider environments there is a 'loose coupling' or lack of integration within organisations which follows a 'cosmopolitan rather than local sense' (Scott and Meyer 1994:2). Organisations tend to follow a wider logic to their structure which may not be coherent in their own setting. For example, the organisational cultures and structures in accounts, marketing and community outreach departments in large charities can tend to resemble, respectively, the tax, media and local community worlds to which they relate much more than they do each other.

Thirdly, the theory suggests there is a patterning within organisations that derives not just from a necessity to co-ordinate or control, but is also dependent on wider 'social and cultural' meanings about what such organisations should look like (Scott and Meyer 1994:2). It is perhaps helpful to see these meaning systems as social institutions with their own rules (Scott 1994:60) and with regulative processes - coercive and mimetic and normative isomorphism being a good example of the latter (Scott and Meyer 1994:64). Voluntary organisations, for example, with only three staff sometimes have a 'chief executive', a role to which outside funding bodies can relate with confidence.

Fourthly, there is seen to be a rationalising effect on organisations from the wider national and international stage. An example here, Meyer suggests, would be the way that activities from schools to railways are now construed less as specialised activities but more as *organisations*. These are then accessible to influence by professional management practices and the 'worldwide discourse [which] instructs on the conduct of organization.' This gives rise to a 'disembodied management...applied in any time and place' leading to far greater standardisation (Meyer 1994:53).

Selznick, often seen as the forerunner of this approach, placed a strong emphasis on the idea of rational actors steering or subverting organisations for strategic aims. He considered the way the informal interactions may subvert rational organisational ends (Powell and DiMaggio 1991:13). Newer institutionalists, according to this commentary, accommodate irrationality into the organisation rather than seeing this as deviant to the prime function of the organisation, and they conceive of the environment as less local and more akin to industrial fields, professions, states or even the world.

One drawback of this approach is that the forces, mechanisms and effects of organisational structures, so well analysed within institutional writings, often privilege

structural over agency factors. This leads Boden (1994:29) to write of the 'disembodied nature' of many of these accounts. Organisational actors are seen as 'cultural dopes' meanwhile organisations grow, develop, or fail apparently irrespective of human action. For organisational actors in social economy organisation value concerns can be critical. They generate strong feelings (Paton 1996:33) and can be crucial motivators of organisational decisions. The degree to which organisations are moulded, and may also mould, their environment is returned to in the final chapter.

Ackroyd too argues agency is not well understood in much institutionalist thinking. Organisations are embedded within society but their activities also have 'disembedding' effects (Ackroyd 2000:103). Charities, for example, through their services may play a role in breaking down traditional patterns of support and kinship - indeed this may be an explicit social change role, for example, in the women's movement and in those organisations which have grown from it. In short, organisations are shaped by the fields around them but are also shaping those fields and wider social traditions at the same time. Conscious social actors are implicated in these processes.

2.3.2 Communities of Practice

It is pertinent to the discussion here to consider other mechanisms operating across the organisational boundary which will be of interest to this study. Networks across and between organisations are attracting increasing interest. In the third sector these ideas are not new. Discussions have appeared on the strategies of co-operative enterprises to nestle together in geographic regions to 'exchange services and share expertise' (Whyte and Whyte 1991:293) and as a way of fostering co-operation amongst co-operatives as part of a business survival strategy (Cornforth, Thomas, Lewis and Spear 1988:226).

At another level Wenger (1998) has highlighted the notion of communities of practice which can operate across or within organisations. These are 'groups of people informally bound together by shared expertise and passion for a joint enterprise' (Wenger 2000).

...Some communities of practice meet regularly - for lunch on Thursdays, say. Others are connected primarily by e-mail networks. A community of practice may or may not have an explicit agenda on a given week...Inevitably, however, people in communities of practice share their experience and knowledge in free-flowing, creative ways that foster new approaches to problems...

(Wenger 2000:139)

Wenger sees communities of practice as working to 'promote the spread of good

practices although he points out it is 'not easy to either create or maintain such communities of practice' or integrate them into the organisation. 'Their strength is self-perpetuating and they are fundamentally informal and self-organising' (Wenger 2000:140,143). These kinds of communities of practice are similar to both the operation extra-organisationally of social movements and the internal roles of what I later term 'value carriers' within organisations. We should be aware of criticisms of such approaches at least within commercial organisations. Gee is critical of communities of practice seeing them as developing staff's tacit knowledge. This is 'just the sort of knowledge and practice that allows workers to add value to the enterprise and to continually re-create communities of practice that can apprentice new workers through immersion' (Gee 1996:66) .

2.3.3 Social Movements

Social movements, as discussed in chapter 1, are marked by an absence of clear organisational form yet they significantly affect social and organisational programmes. Mintzberg (1983:210) citing Zald and Berger, points out the way social movements operating within organisations mean certain people can attempt to take over. Such power may be felt in the social arena too. Beck for example refers to the effects small agonising splinter groups have had on the 'themes of the future', by the way they have put issues on the social agenda and that this represents a 'quite improbable thematic victory' (Beck 1997:19). I argued in an earlier piece that such movements opened up 'new sites of action and activity' (Aiken 2000:15) and these have, within social economy organisations, begun to be institutionalised in organisational form.

We are right then to mark a shaded area of overlap between social movements and organisations but also need to consider some of the differences between the two. Melucci points out for example that 'the functions performed by social movements are not reducible, for example, to those of political parties'; this is partly due to the space such movements occupy as entities which do not have to exercise macro-power (Melucci 1981:230). The same might be said of the distance between such movements and formal organisations.

Most crucially, and with a strong relevance to values, Melucci points out:

The organizational forms of movements are not just "instrumental" for their goals, they are a goal in themselves. Since collective action is focussed on cultural codes, the form of the movement is itself a message, a symbolic challenge to the dominant codes.

(Melucci 1981:60)

Social movements may draw on resources including sympathetic networks, professionals and organisations. In values terms social movements have the space, often denied within the necessarily more pragmatic realm of organisational life, to rehearse, contest and develop values in a purer crucible or 'topos' (Blomqvist 1998). Social movements do not necessarily need to find ways to operationalise their values in the manner of organisations.

2.3.4 Diani's Definition of Social Movements

Diani examined the various definitions of social movements (Diani 1992:2) and suggested it was possible to detect common threads amongst them. In his analysis Diani draws from four traditions of thought. The 'Collective Behaviour' approach (eg Turner and Killian) who see social movements as a peculiar collective behaviour which is both non-organisational and non-institutional. There are those who are most concerned with the conditions under which social movements take their beliefs into action, particularly through their interactions with organisations, such as Resource Mobilisation Theory (eg Zald and McCarthy). There is the political process perspective of Tilly where excluded social actors come together self-consciously with shared identities. Finally, there is the New Social Movements approach associated with Melucci and Touraine where wider structural and cultural changes are implicated (Diani 1992: 2-5).

Diani sees social movements as a social dynamic whereby 'several different actors, be they individuals, informal groups and/or organisations, come to elaborate, through either joint action and/or communication, a shared definition of themselves as being part of the same side in a social conflict (Diani 1992:13). Diani's encompassing definition suggests:

A social movement is a network of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organizations, engaged in a political or cultural conflict, on the basis of a shared collective identity.

(Diani 1992:13)

There is one problem with this definition which Eschele and Stammers (2002) have pointed out. It could include networks of organisations only, which we would not normally wish to include as social movements, and indeed Diani points out 'social movements are not organisations, not even of a peculiar kind' (Diani 1992:14). Otherwise this is a helpful, workable definition for this study.

As Diani points out social movements inevitably involve a coming into conflicting relations with institutions and other movements and indeed 'conflict is a distinctive feature of social movements' (Diani 1992:10). Diani discusses the idea that early writers saw social

movements as extra-institutional in their actions while today it is recognised that there is certainly some interaction and the interaction is indeed complex, so they may act as 'a change agent of symbolic codes or create new possibilities for intervention' (Diani 1992:11).

2.3.5 Fields and Habitus in Inter-organisational Activity

In trying to understand the operation of such intra-organisation mechanisms, whether social movements or communities of practice, it can be helpful to consider Bourdieu's notions of fields and habitus (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1996:16-17). Bourdieu suggests that we are not fully determined by a pre-existing set of conditions, let us say our class background (the habitus which we occupy). We are also not able to totally remove its effects in given situations (the field). What such an account offers us here is a sense in which, for example, affiliated professionals (within a community of practice) or activists (within a social movement) occupy a particular habitus. In given situations (or fields), such groups may exert expertise or influence within the organisation. For social workers an issue of professional ethics may be the 'field' which activates them. For social justice activists a racist meeting may be the trigger. These groups may be present within or around organisations at other times but the absence of the given field may not render the need for them to coalesce and thus they remain hidden from view.

2.4 Typification of Organisational Values

This chapter is concluded by drawing on the authors considered in this and the previous chapter to suggest a typification of organisational values useful for this study. The basic assumptions underpinning this study are that organisational values cannot be reified as actual objects. They should be seen as part of the meaning system in an organisation and are of crucial importance to certain organisational actors. They would therefore need interpreting and understanding in their context and would have to be evidenced not just in explicit statements but also in tacit ways through organisational behaviour. An organisational value for the purpose of this study would not have to be upheld by every person in that organisation but there would need to be evidence of it being of significant importance for the work. This account aims to recognise the inter-relation between organisational values and other organisations and the wider social world. Values form part of an essential core of importance for social economy organisations, they are an end in themselves, and are therefore worthy of particular study.

2.5 Conclusion

In this chapter the philosophical assumptions from the realist position which underlie this study were set out. Theoretical thinking was considered on organisational culture as an organising idea followed by viewing organisations as embedded in their environment. In the next chapter these insights are applied to developing a research strategy for the study.

Figure 2.1: Typification of organisational values

Deeper theoretical level

- 1. Values are not things - rather they need to be interpreted, inferred, discussed and uncovered (Weber).
- 2. Values will form part of the meaning system in the organisation, part of the way the world and/or the organisation is understood. This will sometimes be understood through symbolic codes (Weick, Smircich, Birchall).
- 3. Values operate at, or are accessible at, a conscious level even if not always articulated (Schein).

Organisational theory level

- 1. Values are embedded in notions of organisational culture (Ott, Dawson, Schein, Morgan).
- 2. Values are embedded within a wider context of the organisational environment and social institutions (Scott and Meyer, DiMaggio and Powell).
- 3. Values may be connected to wider social movements (Diani, Meluci) and communities of practice (Wenger).

Features of Values

- 1. There are different varieties of values including product and process values and those concerned with social progress, ideology and instrumentality. (Batsleer, Thomas).
- 2. Values may be explicit or tacit (Polanyi, Nonaka and Takeuchi).
- 3. Values are not necessarily shared by everyone in the organisation. There may be competing or contradictory organisational values within an organisation, and values will be contested and argued over (Paton, Dumas).
- 4. Values will not be uniform or unchanging, they will be subject to dispute and interpretation in specific situations (Paton, Wright, Smircich).
- 5. There will always be a gap between the espoused and the values in action (Argyris and Schön, Paton).
- 6. Values need to be relatively enduring.
- 7. Values would be expected to play a part in the regular discourse of the organisation and in crucial decisions (Schein, Paton).
- 8. Organisations may have different approaches to how they enact their values eg 'reforming organisations' (Mintzberg).
- 9. Values need to be seen as important by those who hold them (Jeavons, Paton).
- 10. Values are not always 'good' or 'helpful.'
- 11. Values are connected to mission, goals, and beliefs (Dawson).
- 12. There needs to be some way/s of maintaining, or passing on values so they endure or can be modified (Stryjan).
- 13. People who hold more power may have more influence on values (Pfeffer, Mintzberg, Paton).
- 14. Values may be carried by social movements into organisations (Melucci, Beck).

Chapter 3:

Research Strategy

In this chapter the approach to the study is set out. In the first section some of the theoretical ideas discussed in the previous chapter are drawn out to develop an argument for the use of case studies in this investigation. In the second section a rationale for, and a description of, the research design is provided. The third section reflects on some aspects of the design in action.

3.1 General Approach to Research Strategy

3.1.1 Theoretical and Practical Considerations

Collier (1994:205-6) points out we should not imagine that research from a realist, or critical realist, position implies being led by a grand plan worked out in our armchairs, in rationalist style, then ‘applied’ to phenomena in the social world. Instead such a position should inform our thinking on the concepts we use, the design of our research, the methods we employ, and the analysis. It should also equip us to tackle philosophical dilemmas encountered during the research.

The realist perspective does not itself privilege a particular research method (Sayer 2000:19), and, indeed, Layder argues for methodological pluralism in research (Layder 1998:178). Pawson and Tilley (1997:154), however, point out that this does not mean a pragmatic pluralism of methods unconnected to a researcher’s theory.

My concerns, on validity, on causation and on the ability to make valid interpretations and inferences were issues that returned, like sciatic pain, at many innocent turns during the research process. Researchers, Yin implores, ‘..should have a well-developed set of procedures for analysing social science data...’ (Yin 1994:141). Yin, who is generally helpful, is not alone amongst authors of methodology textbooks in making such injunctions. I, too, began an earlier version of this chapter with stern ‘parental’ statements to the reader such as the need for ‘robust thinking at design stage.’ Yet, in the imperfect world of empirical research many of the injunctions we wish to apply to ourselves, our research designs and the subjects of our research are inordinately imperfect. Yin alludes to this in pointing out how case study design ‘is not something completed only at the outset of a study’ (Yin 1994:52). Layder addresses this issue in his sympathetic account of the social researcher struggling in the ‘muddy’ world between theory and social research

(Layder 1998:25). Alongside the importance of striving for validity and robustness in design, implementation and analysis, research also involves ad-hocery and craft skill. This is a feature not always well captured in texts although the researcher as a 'bricoleur,' a Jack and Jill of all trades, comes close to this (Denzin and Lincoln 1998b:3-4). I therefore note some realist vulnerability here. Organisations did not always conform to my expectations as to their purposes or legal structure. Conceptual categories which seemed clear at the outset became less clear. Research design needed adaption 'on the road.' In short, implementing a research design is where theorising touches the world, sometimes with an abrupt bump.

3.1.2 The Importance of Conceptual Categories

Sayer is helpful in emphasising the need for careful theorising to develop the necessary abstraction and conceptualisation for research while accepting the nature of a 'complex and messy' social world (Sayer 2000:19). He points out this is vital so we do not assume categories can bear the explanatory weight we might otherwise place upon them in our investigation. Uncritically using categories, such as 'the service sector' is an example here. This term covers everything from transport to hairdressing. Organisational research using such broad categories could therefore lead to either chaotic or glib generalisations. For this reason in the previous two chapters the notions of 'organisational values,' 'social economy organisations' and 'reproduction' were explored so as to indicate how they would be used in this study.

Pawson and Tilley pointed to the way social science explanations involve the examination of causal mechanisms activated in particular contexts in order to assess particular outcomes (Pawson and Tilley 1998:72). This insight concerning the importance of locality reinforced the notion that organisational values and their reproduction could not be easily studied without reference to contextual features. Such features might include factors related to the individual organisation, its history and traditions; the field in which the organisation was operating, and the prevalence of social practices and beliefs associated with the given organisational values.

3.1.3 The Road to Case Study Research

To decide on my research strategy I considered which approach was most appropriate for the questions I was exploring. Sayer (1984:221, 2000:21), drawing from Harré, is helpful here in suggesting there are distinctively different approaches to social research which he terms 'intensive' and 'extensive' approaches. If we consider research examining poverty for example we could look at a survey data on income, household

composition, ethnic origin and, by analysis, identify certain characteristics of sub-groups from this sample. This would be an **extensive** approach. Alternatively we could examine a small group of people in great qualitative detail looking at processes, activities and relations. This would be an **intensive** approach (Sayer 1984: 220). Both approaches have their importance. The extensive approach may enable us to generalise our findings but we can risk making invalid assumptions through neglecting contextual information from intensive research.

I offer a personal example, unconnected to the research, which occurred during the research process which illustrates this distinction. I spent nine months acting as an advocate for my elderly parents to gain a decision on their eligibility to claim attendance allowance from the Benefits Agency. This culminated in a complaint to the Parliamentary Ombudsman about the lengthy delay and letters to the national press¹. The Benefits Agency eventually decided the claim was valid and also made a *ex-gratia* payment to acknowledge the long delay in decision making. Despite this the Ombudsman, however, decided my *complaint* about the process was not eligible for consideration and would not be recorded. Age Concern's policy officer later informed me that government statistics always showed there were negligible complaints to the Ombudsman from older people about benefits issues. An **extensive study** on complaints would give no evidence of an issue to consider. This missed the understanding that elderly people may not know how to complain, they may not feel it is worthwhile, and that if they do complain it may not be recorded. The **intensive approach**, by contrast, can yield missing contextual information which offers a better picture of what is occurring.

Case study designs typically draw on an 'intensive' rather than 'extensive' approach to research using a range of methods. At an early stage therefore I examined how case studies might be used in this study. Yin (1994) points out the decision about which research strategy is most appropriate depends largely on the research questions. Where a study's questions revolve around 'how' questions case study methodology is often appropriate. We can, he suggests:

...identify some situations in which a specific strategy has a distinct advantage. For the case study, this is when a "how" or "why" question is being asked about a contemporary set of events over which the investigator has little or no control.

(Yin 1994:9)

Yin suggests 'study propositions' should point to the ways in which those 'how' questions would be answered, or a criteria by which an explanation would be judged

¹ Letters, 9.7.99, The Independent , 'Grey Power', 26.7.99, The Big Issue.

successful. In this study the basic 'how' question was: 'how do social economy organisations reproduce their organisational values?' The proposal was to discover this by considering processes and practices organisations used to reproduce their values and factors which constrained them.

3.1.4 Surveys as an Investigative Strategy

Surveys provide a common method for investigating issues in social studies and in organisational research. There are annual government surveys on social attitudes (such as Social Trends) and regular statistical analysis on the structure of the UK voluntary sector by organisations such as the Charities Aid Foundation (Saxon-Harold:1995). Both provide helpful social and organisational data collected through survey methods. However it was difficult to see how such approaches, in isolation, could yield the kind of data required for this study. It would be necessary to discover, for example, which organisational values were present in organisations, whether there were tacit values, in what circumstances these values were enacted and what constraints existed around reproducing these values. These insights were likely to come from examining detailed accounts from a range of organisational actors but were unlikely to be easy to extract from survey data.

In contrasting here survey strategies with the use of case studies, this is not to imply there are but two possible research strategies, but rather to illustrate an early distinction that was made. The type of question being asked seemed best suited to an intensive strategy of which case studies provide a good example.

3.1.5 What are Case Studies?

In training contexts the term 'case study', as Langrish (1993) and Yin (1994:2) point out, is used to present a scenario for analysis by group participants. The term is *not* used here in that sense. It is used instead as a specific research strategy with a set of principles behind the circumstances in which it is to be deployed, the way it is to be constructed and conducted, and the manner in which results would be characterised.

Bryman suggests the typical form of a case study is:

The intensive study by ethnography or qualitative interviewing of a single case which may be an organization, life, family, or community.

(Bryman 200:55)

This comes close to describing the kind of rich or 'thick' description (Geertz 1993) needed in my studies on organisations. One of my interests was in whether commercial markets would act as constraining forces for values reproduction. This suggested the need

for organisations to be studied in different locations in relation to such markets. Bryman calls these '**comparative**' or '**multiple case**' designs (Bryman 2001: 53) .

Yin emphasises the way case studies are concerned with studying phenomena within their context when he defines a case study as:

...an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.

(Yin 1994: 13)

He points out that case studies deal with situations where there are many more variables than data points and so rely on multiple sources of evidence.

Thomas proposes case study approaches seek to 'investigate causality directly by looking in detail at how the causal processes work within particular cases' (Thomas 1998: 308). This does not, of course, mean that we might naively 'see' causality in the data (Hammersley 1992:192), any claims to causality must come from our analysis. This approach lends itself well to the study of organisational values reproduction through an intensive approach examining several organisations in action in differing settings, where multiple factors are operating simultaneously, and where it is not possible to isolate any one cause.

Case study research, as Langrish (1993) points out, can be seen as more akin to the biological than the physics research tradition. The former tradition, for example 'glorifies diversity' in the natural world and wide use is made of classification schemes. These may well also have important predictive powers in their own right. Both traditions have their strengths according to Langrish, depending on the object of the study. Subjects such as organisational change which deal with change over time, he suggests, may be best suited to the biological tradition (Langrish 1993:358). Langrish elaborates six types of case study: the **comparative**, the **representative**, the **best practice**, the **one next door**, the '**cor - look at that**', and the **taxonomic**. He suggests 'case studies have to start with an answer to the question: examples of what?' (Langrish 1993:362). They may lead, in Mills' terms, to classifications and the production of 'types.' These may clarify dimensions between organisations enabling the researcher to 'imagine and build' (Wright Mills 1970:234).

Within a given case study a plurality of methods is often activated, allowing for interviews, group discussions, documentary evidence, studying artifacts and even small scale surveys (Yin 1994:79). This combination of methods can build a picture of a complex process.

3.1.6 Embedded or Holistic Design in Case Studies

Yin suggests multiple case study designs can have an embedded or holistic design (Yin 1994:42). If a particular department that is integral to an organisation is being studied this would be called an embedded design. Where a whole organisation is being studied this would be called holistic. The most likely format for this study was considered to involve **multiple cases** with an **embedded design** in order to concentrate on a particular key department or section within the organisation.

3.1.7 Researcher Skills in Case Study Research

It is important to not neglect the **skills of the researcher**. Yin points out 'investigator skills' remain an important part in case study work (Yin 1994:55-56). He suggests the investigator should, for example, have good listening skills and an ability to ask good questions. Through my own work in the voluntary and community sector, I had undertaken training in interviewing and listening skills, and also been involved in data collection with community projects. I therefore had initial confidence in my own blend of skills to undertake the variety of activities demanded by case study research strategy. My background in the social economy sector might also offer advantages in gaining access to organisations prepared to participate.

3.1.8 Objections to Case Studies: Generalisability and Subjectivity

Two frequent objections to case studies as a research strategy are now addressed. These objections concern questions of generalisability and subjectivity.

A common objection is that there is no scope to **generalise** from case study findings because even with several cases this will be insufficient to be considered representative. Cases studies cannot lead to *statistical* generalisability due to the small number of objects studied. However, multiple cases should not be seen as 'samples' as in survey work where a greater number of data points, or a more representative sample, will be a key concern. Finding a particularly interesting example of a phenomena, as Langrish (1993) pointed out, may be of far greater importance in case study research. For example in a study examining successful worker co-operatives, the interest was 'how some co-operatives survived, why some failed and how those that succeeded in various ways managed to do so (Thomas 1998:309).' The aim was not to find representative cases, indeed quite the reverse could be the case. A survivor in a particular environment could well be of the greatest interest, just as it is, to use Langrish's analogy, in the biological field.

Yin argues for a replication, as opposed to a sampling, logic. So with multiple cases the design needs to take account of examining a range of theoretically interesting dimensions

of difference which may be explored in the cases. The logic of case choice, for Yin, is then based on replication rather than sampling and thus the number of cases does not aim for statistical generalisations but rather theoretical generalisations. In this connection two replication logics are typically distinguished: literal and theoretical. In multiple case studies **literal replication** means the cases chosen should demonstrate the same outcome. **Theoretical replication** means we may find different results but for reasons in line with our theory (Yin 1994:46).

This can be illustrated by Abbott's research on Khannawallis. These are women in Bombay who prepare meals for migrant workers without access to cooking facilities (Abbott 1998:202; cited by Thomas 1998:324). Her proposition was that the women undertook this work to boost their family income. If Abbott's thesis was correct then married women, with more money, should be less active as Khannawallis than single women. This was found to be so. Women with *similar* income, caste, or economic position, showed a similar propensity to undertake meal preparation. This represented **literal replication**. Women with different income levels, caste, or economic position, showed *different* propensities to undertake this work but for theoretically understandable reasons. Such outcomes represent **theoretical replication** (Thomas 1998: 324). Abbotts' study on Khanwallis women shows how a case study can convincingly support, or refute general theoretical propositions.

There are also some subjects of study where it is inconceivable to ever have a satisfactory 'sample.' Yin uses the hypothetical example of studying leadership amongst US presidents. The different time points involved and the fact that less than 50 people have held this office in a period of over 200 years make the search for a 'sample' a misplaced logic (Yin 1994:48). Furthermore we should not fail to study some subjects merely because they are awkward or that we cannot gain complete understanding: Hammersley argues that generalising from case studies is weaker than from surveys rather than impossible (Hammersley 1992:189).

A second objection to case studies, described by Bryman, can be that case studies like much qualitative research, are too **subjective**, relying on:

...the researcher's often unsystematic views about what is significant and important, and also upon the close personal relationships that the researcher frequently strikes up with the people studied.

(Bryman 200:282)

However the nature of work on organisational values may require a position that attempts to understand from participant's own standpoint their views and understandings

of what they are experiencing. Such a notion has a lineage back to Weber's 'verstehen' approach (Parkin 1986:19) which attaches importance to the meanings social actors apply to their actions. What is important is to introduce a notion of what Bryman calls transparency into the research (Bryman 2001:284-5) whereby the researcher can: demonstrate that records have been kept; show the clear steps taken in the research; and argue why some data was discarded or not pursued (Yin 1994:94-98). This does not mean that the research can be exactly replicated but does provide sufficient evidence for the research and the results to be subsequently challenged. This has happened with the records from the Hawthorne Studies (see Schwartzman 1993:15) which have been studied and re-analysed many times. This approach is consistent with the realist position which suggests that research is investigating more than self referential discourse and thus open to fallibility (Sayer 2000:62).

3.1.9 Summary of Reasons Supporting the Case Study Research Strategy

These are reasons then why a case study research strategy was seen to be an effective approach to address the research questions. **Firstly**, the concern was with detailed 'how' questions. **Secondly**, survey data was deemed inappropriate in terms of providing neither the detail, the ecological setting, nor the explanative material necessary to illuminate the general research questions. **Thirdly**, within the case study strategy the single case was not likely to be most appropriate to this study. Although it might have been possible to locate one good example of an organisation excellent at reproducing its values, this would not have enabled the study to interrogate the question of how contrasting social economy organisations approach values reproduction. **Fourthly**, case studies provided scope to use a range of research methods within each case study, such as interviewing a range of organisational actors, conducting group discussions, and analysing printed material. This offered possibilities for uncovering rich ethnographic data and for triangulating actor perceptions on values. **Fifthly**, I considered I had a suitable range of skills required of a case study researcher.

There are however a variety of case study designs. To consider the best approach for this study a series of classic case studies was reviewed.

3.1.10 Review of Classic Case Studies

W.F. Whyte's (1993) *Street Corner Society*, is a single in depth case study with a researcher immersed in a poor neighbourhood through which he obtained large amounts of ethnographic data. This exploratory study illustrated the careful processes of checking back

explanations with a key informant and revising explanative assumptions as new evidence emerged. It also pointed to some of the ethical issues of ownership: to whom do the ideas and accumulated evidence belong? The extended ethnographic process of this study was not appropriate for my investigation. **Ethics and ownership** questions were important and informed my approach. I took care to inform participants in advance on these issues in writing (see appendix).

Boys in White (Becker 1961) is another ethnographic study. It aimed to discover, by following a particular cohort, how medical initiates come to adopt the professional persona of doctors during their training. It was of interest in examining changes over time amongst a group. This stimulated my thinking on how I would research reproduction of values - a process taking place over time. This led me to ask in my research for particular **examples or incidents involving values** which I could then examine, perhaps retrospectively, over time.

All the President's Men, (Bernstein and Woodward 1974) is a journalistic descriptive case study (Yin 1994:16) detailing the detective work involved in exposing the Watergate cover-up in the USA. My learning here was on the importance of record keeping and of a scrupulous approach to corroboration. The authors sought to always gain at least three sources to back any assertions - an important lesson in **triangulation**, gaining, for example, multiple sources of data on any interpretation (see Stake 1995:107).

These three studies were largely **exploratory** in conception. The first two did not, by their own admission, commence with firm propositions or a workable research design (see Becker's conclusion for example). In that sense they do not fit some of the subsequent theory developed by Yin on case study research. There remain formidable theoretical objections over the claims made by some naturalistic studies in ethnography (see Hammersley 1992:11-12) with proposals to 'tell it like it is' as suspect. At a more pragmatic level, however, for most researchers, there is insufficient time and funding available to undertake these kinds of long ethnographic studies. Projects such as the Hawthorne Studies in the early 1930s, involving over 30 interviewers working with 20,000 workers over 3 years, (Schwartzman 1993:8) now appear dazzling in scale!

In contrast to these studies Allison's (1999) *The Cuban Missile Crisis*, came from a decidedly theoretical basis and did not require the lengthy observations demanded by Whyte and Becker's studies. It is an **explanatory case study** (Yin 1994:6) and presents documentary evidence to examine three rival theories about how the missile crisis was resolved. It tests the same evidence set against each competing explanation, and then offers one theory as a 'best fit' to the known evidence. Allison's work provides an excellent example of using case studies to consider rival theoretical propositions. Nevertheless it was

hard to conceive that the current study could be so widely open ended in its explorative nature as Whyte or Becker's work. Nor did it have such sharply drawn rival theoretical propositions as Allison's explanatory study.

From the organisational literature Peter's and Waterman's (1995) *In Search of Excellence*, is a popular text which can be classed as a multiple case study design. Here successful US companies were examined to suggest a pattern of common features. The positivist assumptions of their work were mentioned in chapter 2, however, the interest here was methodological. Nevertheless the study suggests an approach to cross-organisational analysis by looking at common features.

Scott, Alcock, Russell and Macmillan's (2000) series of case studies on voluntary organisations used different organisations to illustrate features such as 'values and identity', or 'networking' or 'strategic planning.' This series owed more to Stake's (1995) approach. Stake distinguished intrinsic and extrinsic studies: '...for **intrinsic case studies** [the case] is dominant...for **extrinsic case study** [the issues] are dominant' (Stake 1995:10-16). In these cases the organisational issues studied were more dominant than the organisation. This thematic approach provided useful explorations of tensions around the features they were examining. For my own study something of both the intrinsic and the extrinsic needed to be brought together. An extrinsic issue of values was being examined but local contexts were also being held as important and in that sense the detail of the intrinsic case was likely to be significant.

Developing Successful Worker Co-operatives (Cornforth, Thomas, Lewis and Spear 1988), examined the trajectory of 16 UK worker co-operatives and, by analysing differences between co-operatives, developed a typology of four co-operative types. This conceptual framework provided a useful aid to understanding how different patterns of business development may be associated with different types of co-operatives. Here the cases build a theoretical frame by developing ideal types against which future research can challenge or build.

These readings informed my thinking on the case study research design. This approach can be summarised as follows. The study would involve **exploratory case studies** with a **multiple and comparative design**. The **theoretical considerations** included the extent to which location in different markets might affect values processes as well as the kinds of values held. These considerations would affect the **choice of cases** so as to find interesting dimensions of difference between cases. It was envisaged examining the affect on values of: **internal organisational culture** including **formal and informal processes**; **environmental factors** especially the market location of organisations; and inter-organisational factors such as **social movements and communities of practice**.

3.2 Research Design

3.2.1 Overview and Rationale

Research design is concerned with boundaries, both ruling in and ruling out certain variables, data, and relations for examination (Huberman and Miles 1998:185). Essentially research design ‘provides a framework for the collection and analysis of data’ (Bryman 2001:29). Yin talks of the traditional view of a research design as ‘..an action plan for getting from here to there..’ and cites Nachmias and Nachmias who see it as a ‘*logical model of proof* that allows the researcher to draw inferences concerning causal relations among the variable under investigation’ (Yin 1994:20). The research design can be seen as a ‘blueprint’ which asks what questions to tackle, what might be the relevant data, and how it would be analysed.

This is close to Pawson and Tilley’s (1997:85) conception of realist research which sees theories being ‘framed in terms of propositions about how mechanisms are fired in contexts to produce outcomes.’ They point to research on anti-crime strategies on housing estates where initially weak theories were explored through examination of two cases which then concluded with a more sophisticated theory taking into account the ‘characteristically’ complex outcomes of the research, with high attention to local contexts and ‘close scrutiny’ of local communities to arrive at a more sophisticated understanding of the phenomena (Pawson and Tilley 1997:103). This has some resonance for this study.

3.2.2 An Ethnographic or Clinical Approach?

Schein (1985) distinguishes between two approaches to inquiry in organisational studies, namely the ‘clinical’ or ‘ethnographic.’ He suggests the **clinical approach**, which he favours, is similar to the consultant or therapist role. He argues, after Lewin, that only when attempting to change a system ‘does one demonstrate any real understanding.’

A “clinical perspective” is one where the group members are clients who have their own interests as the prime motivator for the involvement of the “outsider,” often labelled “consultant” or therapist in this context.

(Schein 1985:21)

By contrast, Schein suggests, the **ethnographic approach** leads to a relation resembling that of a ‘researcher’ and his or her ‘subject.’ In this situation the relation to the data, and the data revealed, is different. Here the organisation is not necessarily seeking help and permission for entry must be gained. The organisation being researched cannot

decide when sufficient data has been collected or when the study is complete. This constitutes, as Schein correctly points out, the presence of a different psychological contract between two parties. The hint is that a strong working alliance cannot be established if the organisation being studied has no need of the results.

The 'ethnographic' stance is seen as a more distant relation involving the researcher in bringing his or her own models to the situation, although Schein concedes that the consultant does this too. The orientation is one of understanding rather than of solving problems or changing a situation.

The ethnographer obtains concrete data in order to understand the culture [she/]he is interested in...Though the ethnographer must be faithful to the observed and experienced data, [she/] he brings to the situation a set of concepts or models that motivated the research in the first place.

(Schein 1985:21)

There is some force in Schein's argument. The 'clinical' approach might at first sight appear more collaborative and of interest to social economy organisations. Access issues were problematic in some cases as will be described shortly. Nevertheless exclusive use of a clinical approach could lead to the neglect of issues that do not immediately present themselves as interesting to practitioners. My own approach in Schein's schema was therefore to orientate myself to the 'ethnographic approach.' This meant appreciating a necessary distinction of interests and roles between researcher and organisation. One advantage of this approach could be that once access was gained I, as researcher, would not be seen to be so strongly aligned to a particular organisational outcome. This could mean some organisational actors might talk more readily.

3.2.3 An Initial Exploratory Study

Several authors suggest the use of exploratory, or pilot, studies to inform the full research (Yin 1994:52; Chataway and Joffe 1998:236). A pilot may imply undertaking a smaller version of the main study. This early piece of research was used to help form my questions and firm up my framework and I therefore prefer to call it an exploratory study, which should not be confused with the terminology 'exploratory case study' used earlier.

3.2.4 The Approach

Some of the details about this initial exploratory study are contained in the appendices. In this section a quick overview is given and the findings are described.

I first emailed or wrote to 28 practitioners in the field who I knew, or knew by

repute. This group would be expected to have knowledge of quality social economy organisations either through their employment or their overview of the sector. The aim was to generate a list of quality social economy organisations that were reasonably well established and of medium size (40-500 staff).

All but one of my contacts responded and their suggestions yielded a list of 60 organisations. I excluded funding organisations, research/think tank organisations, national support organisations/ intermediaries, and big organisations/ international development agencies and some very small informal community groups. The remainder were grouped under the following headings:

1. Worker co-operatives
2. Voluntary organisations (trading style social enterprises)
3. Neighbourhood/ community based voluntary organisations
4. Voluntary organisations (service style)
5. Voluntary organisations (advocacy/ campaigning style).

This typology was influenced by the New Economics Foundation schema on 'Ways of Thinking about the Social Economy' (figure 1.2) which locates organisations by considering their position in economic markets. It was also influenced by Handy's (1988:10) five kinds of voluntary organisations. He distinguished those concerned with service provision, research and advocacy/campaigning, self-help and support groups, clubs and associations and national or regional intermediary (bodies). The term 'social economy organisations' covers a broader range than the voluntary sector so a broad category to include trading charities and worker co-ops was added.

Phone interviews with 11 organisations were conducted following contact by letter. The question areas and organisations are shown in the appendices. Two of the 11 organisations approached for interviews subsequently became case studies in the main study (Ormiston and the Centre for Alternative Technology). The aim was to look at organisations across a spectrum starting from those working in very commercialised markets (the co-operatives), followed by those involved in trading or enterprise through to more service orientated and campaigning organisations. These latter organisations were anticipated to be more in receipt of public funds or supporter donations.

3.2.5 Organising Typologies

There was one unfortunate effect of my boundary conditions on organisational size. This led to an early exclusion of organisations that were Black or Asian led. Many of these

organisations tend to be smaller and sometimes more informal. My criteria on organisational size had the effect of excluding them. However, to research organisational processes, procedures and practices organisations were needed that would exhibit this dynamic. With the co-operatives for the exploratory study I decided to concentrate on worker co-ops, although I later brought in some consumer co-operatives for contrast.

3.2.6 Framework

At this stage a simple schema was developed that postulated campaigning organisations as those that might be the most purist with their values; service style organisations were expected to face greater challenges to their values through a pragmatic engagement with local authority or state funding mechanisms; social enterprise organisations might face the greatest challenges to their values through an engagement with commercial markets. At this stage I considered there might be distinctive strategies for values reproduction associated with these three positions. This framework remained as an orientating device beyond the exploratory study, and into the main study.

3.2.7 Outcomes of Exploratory Comparative Study

The exploratory study suggested some promising avenues for studying values reproduction and highlighted some possible influential factors. The **different nature of the values** organisations held emerged as important for reproduction particularly with differences between **product values** (at SUMA co-operative) and **process values** (at Ormiston children's organisation). The reproduction of values seemed to involve many **informal processes** within the organisation (at Community Action Furness) as well as **formal management** processes (at Ormiston). The importance of **tacit values** and that values are **embedded in the practice** of the organisational activities was highlighted. How **new staff** gained access to organisational values led to fruitful answers. Shifts in values and **values conflicts** were also evident (World Wildlife Fund). Some of the social enterprise organisations operating in **commercial markets** spoke confidently of being able to enact their values (Community Action Furness, Spitalfields Small Business Association). Some of these findings were drawn into the formulation of my research questions and the design for the full study.

The review of classic case studies and some of the value conflicts described in the initial exploratory study suggested a way of examining reproduction over time, albeit retrospectively. The idea was to consider situations where a values issue was, or more likely, had been, a subject of recent debate. Values reproduction would be learnt about through the understandings of different organisational actors. The literature around critical

incidents (Schein 1985 and Tripp 1993) was also of importance here. However if taken on in full, this amounted to a significant new method in its own right. I therefore more modestly improvised, called the intended situations '**values examples**' and placed them as one of the question areas for the interviews.

3.2.8 Research Questions

The overall research question was:

How do quality social economy organisations reproduce their organisational values?

The sub questions were:

R1: What organisational strategies or processes do quality social economy organisations employ to maintain their core organisational values?

R2. What features, factors or conditions seem to help or hinder social economy organisations in maintaining their values?

R3. Thirdly, what constraints from the environment do social economy organisations face in the reproduction of their values, specifically in regard to the effect of income streams from commercial markets or government contracts or grants?

R1 was targeted at explicit organisational strategies (for example **management processes** around working groups, induction, away days, membership strategies) and to uncover **informal processes** (for example socialisation, tacit processes). Were there factors such as the presence of **particular people** (founders, strong nurturers, or dissidents) that enabled reproduction? It was anticipated organisational actors might be less aware of some of these latter mechanisms.

R2 was conceived to tackle what effect the features, factors and conditions appertaining to the different organisations had on their values reproduction. For example did the **kind of organisational values** (for example product or process) affect the way an organisation reproduced its values? Were there any special features of the organisation concerned with its culture or with the affect of **social movements** or **professional networks**? These were anticipated to be only partially within the awareness and control of

organisational actors.

R3 was intended to examine other forces external to the organisation but with a constraining effect on the organisation. My key concern here was how income streams associated with **commercial markets** or **state markets** would affect the organisation. Such forces were anticipated to be little under the direct control of organisational actors.

3.2.9 Summary of the Elements of the Design

The study was to be undertaken within a **broad exploratory case study** research strategy of a **comparative** nature which would use **multiple cases**, between six and eight in total, with an **embedded design** (Yin 1994). It would aim to take **different types of organisations** across the **social economy sector** to examine the reproductive process in different settings. The extent to which **location in different markets** might affect values processes as well as the kinds of values held would be considered. These considerations would affect the **choice of cases** to find interesting differences. It was envisaged that **factors to be considered in each organisation** would be similar.

Areas to be examined included the effects of: **internal organisational culture** including formal and informal structures, **environmental factors** especially the market location of organisations, and **inter-organisational factors** such as social movements and communities of practice.

The **boundary conditions** aimed for were to take organisations with more than 40 but less than 500 staff, they would be established organisations and more than 5 years old. The rationale for this was as follows. Firstly the aim was to look at organisations which were (a) large enough to require the development of management structures and processes in their operation (Child 1977:16). Secondly the intention was to look at established organisations that might be expected to have developed organisational processes and be 'institutionalised' in Selznik's (1957:21) sense.

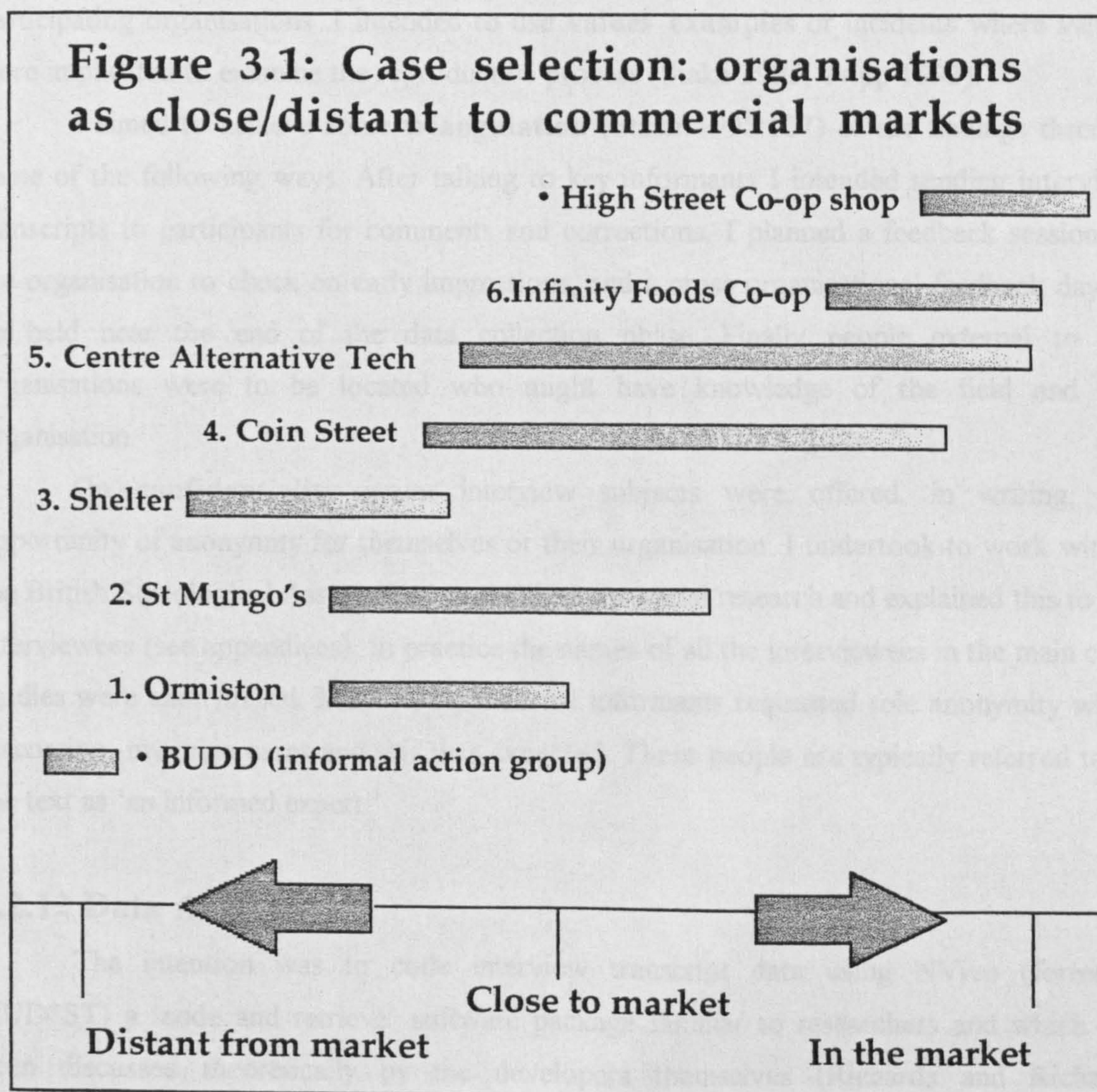
The **unit of analysis** of this study was intended to examine the reproductive processes in certain departments or sections within organisations which were perceived to be crucial locations in the reproduction of an identified key organisational value.

3.2.10 Selecting Cases

Figure 3 shows my initial schema of organisations seen as close or distant to commercial markets. This schema could not be sustained in any simple form as is explained shortly. However this conceptualisation shows the rationale for case selection. Organisations were searched for across this spectrum. A campaigning organisation (my case here was Shelter) was conceived as being the furthest from market pressures. Next on this

line was a typical service style voluntary organisations involved with grants and perhaps some government contracts (Ormiston). 'Closer to the markets' was St Mungo's which I (and they) understood was a Friendly Society having incomes from rents and buildings. A typical social enterprise organisation was then sought, such as a development trust, which would be engaged in market activities but for social purposes (Coin Street Community Builders). The Centre for Alternative Technology presented itself as an organisation with a strong social mission but with a co-operative and PLC base, operating in commercial markets. Finally, immersed in commercial markets but with a clear social purpose a reasonably sized worker co-operative was sought (Infinity Wholefoods).

Serendipity plays a role in research and in this respect I was opportunistic. During the research I was involved in another project examining 'the co-operative advantage' which studied two large **high street consumer co-operatives** (in **Lincoln and Oxford**). I also became active in a local volunteer only campaigning organisation, **Brighton Urban Design and Development (BUDD)**. These organisations were highly value centred and at the ends of my imagined spectrum. I undertook some additional work and included them as minor



case studies to see how my comparative framework might work with organisations at the extremes.

3.2.11 Methods

I aimed to use **semi-structured interviews** to produce data with (a) a range of espoused, important, organisational values and, (b) locations where some of the specific departments or sections which participants locate as playing a key role as guardians or definers of the organisational values and, (c) learn of factors affecting key organisational incidents which could act as defining moments. This was to inform the agenda of a **discussion** with organisational actors with the aim of reflecting on the process of the reproduction of organisational values. These techniques were designed to draw out both espoused and tacit processes. **Documentary sources** about the organisation were to be used throughout for background information. Finally a cross-organisational **focus group** was planned to gain feedback from organisational actors on observations and analysis of the organisational reproduction process. This was to involve participants from each of the participating organisations. I intended to use **values examples** or incidents where values were implicated to examine the reproductive process (Stake 1995; Tripp 1993).

I aimed to achieve some **triangulation** (Stake 1995:107) of the findings through some of the following ways. After talking to key informants I intended sending interview transcripts to participants for comments and corrections. I planned a feedback session to the organisation to check on early impressions, and a cross organisational feedback day to be held near the end of the data collection phase. Finally people external to the organisations were to be located who might have knowledge of the field and the organisation.

On **confidentiality** issues interview subjects were offered, in writing, the opportunity of anonymity for themselves or their organisation. I undertook to work within the British Sociological Association's guidelines for social research and explained this to my interviewees (see appendices). In practice the names of all the interviewees in the main case studies were anonymised. Most of my external informants requested role anonymity when discussing my main cases and this was expected. These people are typically referred to in the text as 'an informed expert.'

3.2.12 Data Analysis

The intention was to code interview transcript data using NVivo (formerly NUD*ST) a 'code and retrieve' software package familiar to researchers and which has been discussed theoretically by the developers themselves (Richards and Richards

1998:211). This has theoretical affinities with Glaser and Strauss's (1967) grounded theory in that it can be used a part of a theory generation process, and easily generates conceptual trees to show the links between units of text that have been assigned codes and sub-codes. This particular theoretical frame is not necessarily constraining and many researchers, as Richards and Richards (1998:236), point out, have used the coding facilities simply as a convenient indexing system.

3.3 Reflections on the Research

3.3.1 The Research in Action

I maintained a **research diary** throughout the project where impressions and problems were logged. The following extract sums up some of the dilemmas faced mid-way through with the research design. Within early parts of the study I was, at times, trying to fit my research design to my object of study rather than the other way round. This dilemma is rehearsed in this extract from my research diary where I debate whether (a) a more exploratory style or (b) an explanatory style of case studies was appropriate.

Research Design: some supplementary thoughts

...[this] made me think was I trying to fit my research design too much into an 'ought' of how I assumed cases studies should be done? In so doing actually losing sight of what I wanted to find out?...I seem to have got stuck looking at too many factors which may affect value reproduction and thinking I needed to examine comparative differences between all these operating factors, all acting across each other...this feels like it is more of an exploratory study...

(Extract from research diary 18.4.00)

Yin's (1994:44-51) preferred style of design for an investigation, as discussed earlier, provides an important discipline. Yet too rigid an adherence to such a method may not always be appropriate, particularly where the theme of the investigation (organisational values) requires a large degree of interpretation and the causal pattern is complex. Some insight into this was gained late in my study from Pawson and Tilley's (1998:31) work, where they consider how social explanation may need to move from a 'successionist' Humean account of causation, often favoured by positivist analysts, which follows an experimental design close to Yin. They favour instead a 'generative' approach where the simple conjunction of events, or the application of an external change, may not necessarily imply a causal linkage because the *internal properties* of an object of study must also be taken into account in generating a given transformation (Pawson and Tilley 1998:33). So, some organisations in highly constrained circumstances may thrive, rather than wilt, due to the presence of internal factors.

3.3.2 Choice of Cases

There are two points to make under **selection of cases**. My plan for initial selection of cases was on the basis of the dimension of difference on a spectrum of 'closer or more distant' to commercial markets. Further, it was envisaged undertaking cases **iteratively** to provide a more flexible design - that is undertaking the research in one organisation and then proceeding to find a contrasting example, rather than selecting all the cases at the outset. In practise both of these were problematic, the first for conceptual reasons, the second for practical reasons.

3.3.3 Revised Category: commercial markets and quasi-markets

As the study proceeded the idea of 'closer or distant from commercial markets' became insufficiently rigorous. All organisations can be seen to be operating in some kind of market and a more sensible division was to look at different *kinds* of markets and consider their characteristic effects and what this implied for values reproduction. As Mackintosh points out '...the practices of what is, in fact, marketed, have... changed over time...the social boundaries of the market shift, and are historically and socially constituted' and she goes on to point out the difficulties not-for profits face to their identity as they bid for services (Mackintosh 1998:212; 238). For this reason the broad, but nevertheless helpful, distinction was made between two kinds of markets with distinctive differences: quasi-markets (Le Grand 1993) and commercial markets. This does not imply there are only two kinds of markets. We could argue for example that, as well as the market in government contracts implied by Le Grand's term, there is also a market in charitable donations or a market in funds from charitable foundations. Nor does this imply the organisations examined did not have some mixture of involvement in different markets. However this general categorisation enabled a general distinction to be made between two recognisable kinds of social economy organisation: those operating close to the state and those operating close to commercial undertakings. Finer distinctions can be made, but this separation served reasonably well for this study. There were then three organisations that could be described as being located predominately in commercial markets (Infinity, Centre for Alternative Technology and Coin Street), and three that were closer to involvement with the local or national state (Ormiston, St Mungo's and Shelter).

3.3.4 Practical Adjustments

On the practical issue, undertaking **iterative cases** proved to not be feasible as the process of **negotiating access** (see Schein 1985:21) into organisations was often extended.

The study could not have been completed in the timescale if one study was to be completed before the next was started.

It was hard in practice to organise **feedback sessions** to organisations due to their own time pressures and commitments and despite promising responses from four of the organisation only one full feedback event (at Ormiston) was undertaken although two others remain pending with organisational contacts.

The **cross organisational feedback event** was organised in November 2001 (see appendix 7) and was attended by representatives from four of the organisation studied. The event occurred while the study was still current for organisations but before findings had been analysed in detail. In that sense it was a compromise between organisational and researcher timescales.

Data analysis issues in action NVivo, was to effectively create an easily accessible database of interview material according to themes. Little use was made of the conceptual trees. Interviews were coded using 10 to 12 categories, or nodes, (such as 'management process', 'commercial market', 'tacit values', 'social movement' and so on). These were quickly expanded as new or refined categories were suggested from the data. On reflection this may have made the process of coding and analysis over-burdensome. I had transcribed all but five of over 50 taped interviews myself so could claim to be 'close to the data' so the coding process was useful in providing a second run through the data in a concentrated time period. My chief use of the package was in providing a way of reflecting on the data in new ways and enabling me to access textual evidence relating to important themes speedily at the writing up stage.

3.3.5 The Difficulty of Locating Campaigning Organisations

It was hard to locate campaigning organisations that were prepared to take part in this research. An environmental organisation was initially helpful and sympathetic. It took a considerable time, however, for the organisation to decide whether they could be involved. They had concerns about giving me access for fear of compromising the confidentiality of their current campaign and eventually declined. I asked former colleagues and other researchers for suggestions of reasonably sized campaigning organisations. Many of the responses offered organisations which were too small for this study. One researcher into social movements suggested that the current political climate favoured local or international campaigning organisations with few at the national level.²

I had worked in the homelessness field and hoped that this would enable me to gain access to an organisation such as Shelter. Three months after my first contact, I received an

² I am grateful to Neil Stammers at Sussex University for this insight.

email with some suggestions of names to talk to. Attempts to contact the sender of the email, did not prove feasible as the person had left the organisation. I decided to start contacting the names supplied and to work from that point.

Organisations and respondents do not present themselves in the neat framework originally envisaged by a researcher's design. I needed to adapt to the situation. These observations are made to illustrate both some of the access difficulties, not unique to Shelter, and some of the subsequent dilemmas which arose. Ironically for my determination to locate a campaigning organisation I found myself interviewing people in a department that was predominately service orientated. Nevertheless this threw up some unexpectedly rich data. As de Vaus says, despite some screening of cases to fit the type of case we are looking for:

Even when screening is introduced we may still end up selecting inappropriate cases. Nevertheless these cases may be useful for other purposes.

(de Vaus 2001: 242)

In this instance my desire to select a campaigning organisation which appeared to be of good repute led me to an organisation, in the part examined, which turned out instead to be a good example of a contracting organisation.

3.3.6 Value Carriers and External Advocates

I introduce two terms within this study, 'value carriers' and 'external advocates' which need an introductory comment here as they were terms I coined during the course of the research. **Value carriers** are key people sprinkled throughout the organisation who seek especially to champion the organisational values. **External advocates** are people with no formal role within the organisation but who act as informal friends of the organisation. Typically they may be former employees or people active on issues relevant to the organisation but in other settings. They may offer support, information, expertise or influence but may remain dormant for long periods.

3.3.7 Some Issues on Ethics: confidentiality

A methodological note here on researcher ethics needs adding. I spoke to a range of people at Shelter who acknowledged, in their own way, the severe problems that contracts were having on the Housing Services department suggesting severe threats to the organisation's values. The picture was generally consistent with an interview I conducted with a senior commentator who had worked in the homelessness field but who did not wish to be attributed.

Errol: ...I think the pressure group side of their work has dropped to a general campaigning against homelessness...seeking to reduce homelessness by a certain amount - this is just like the government - and it is a bit vague, rather than specifically, say, campaigning against the increased powers of eviction given to local authorities, or the way homelessness people are no longer given priority for social housing...

During my study at Shelter, I felt my findings might show the organisation in a negative light and therefore decided to anonymise the case because, even though no major corrections were requested from interview transcripts I felt some responsibility as a researcher in the field. As Schein has pointed out, sometimes in the case of conducting research the picture that emerges places a responsibility on a researcher to be confidential even where the organisation has not requested this.

...if the case reveals material that the organization is not aware of, such publication can produce undesirable insight or tension on the part of members and can create undesirable impressions on the part of outsiders.

(Schein 1985:140)

In a helpful analogy to counselling settings he points to the way that evidence may be put together in a way that a client could not reasonably have expected when a contract was originally agreed. Some responsibility must be placed with the researcher to manage that discrepancy. My purpose was to investigate issues of values reproduction. There is a danger that if practice is exposed publicly by researchers which harms an individual organisation, then future researchers may find access harder, organisations may be tempted to show their most perfect of faces, and lessons on organisational learning in the sector may be lost. I acknowledged myself as a collaborator seeking to improve the sector's welfare, rather than as an imagined detached observer. As Denzin puts it:

The age of the putative value free social science appears to be over. Accordingly ...any discussion of this process must become political, personal and experiential.

(Denzin:1998:315)

On the other hand the construction of anonymity, as Yin points out, can be extremely time consuming and complicated as well as hampering later investigators.

Not only does it eliminate some important background information about the case, but it also makes the mechanics of composing the case difficult.

(Yin 1994:144)

To remove contextual information made it hard to explain the work of the agency

and how this supported or undermined its values. I had maintained anonymity at three successive conferences where I had presented findings (Dilemmas, London September 2000; NCVO, London; September 2001, ARNOVA, Miami, November 2001). However, late in the drafting process a newspaper article (Dean 2002) described some details about Shelter which changed my opinion. Firstly, some of my points were reported and were therefore now in the public domain. Secondly, a new director was about to be appointed. The passage of time between data collection and writing up meant that my data remained of research interest but would be unlikely to offer contemporary damage to the organisation. I therefore decided in July 2002 to reinstate the organisational identity.

3.3.8 Some Notes on Writing

At different places within this thesis the first person style has been adopted in the text. I have tended to use this more when describing, in chapters 4 and 5, the details of the case study research within organisations although it is not completely absent elsewhere. Such a style is not unproblematic for at least two reasons. Firstly, it can imply an overly close and immediate connection with events and people and a claim for privileged access to the truth. It may imply that the writer holds these occurrences were real in some obvious and unmediated manner. This is famously described in Van Maanan's (1988) entertaining descriptions of different ethnographer's styles of recounting their 'tales.' A second difficulty is that the use of the first person can be tiring to the reader by not providing the same textual variety possible in passive or third person constructions. This is not merely an aesthetic consideration. Cases need to be written in an engaging or even 'seductive' manner in order to be read and noted Yin (1994:151).

There are however arguments in favour of acknowledging the 'I' in social science research. Rosen (1991:18), writing on organisational ethnography, draws on Van Maanan's spectrum between 'confessional', 'impressionist' and 'realist' approaches to writing the text. In the 'confessional' approach the sometimes nervous researcher becomes fully visible to the reader while in the 'realist' approach the objective ethnographer is completely absent. The 'impressionist' is somewhere in between - akin to a storyteller regaling certain incidents significant for the tale - but clearly engaged in an act of composition.

Both Van Maanan and Rosen's labelling is amiss here in giving a 'realist' label to a positivist approach. The kind of realism taken in my account accommodates a 'soft constructivist' position (not necessarily inconsistent with the 'impressionist' style those authors discuss) but is not identical to positivism. This is an issue I dealt with in the early part of chapter 2. Leaving aside that particular issue of terminology the idea of a spectrum of approaches does provide a useful orientation. As Rosen correctly points out the

approach a researcher takes depends fundamentally on issues of ontology (Rosen 1991:21). The ontological approach taken in this study is a realist stance, in the sense intended by Sayer as discussed in chapter 2.

The approach to the writing of the case is then necessarily more than simply an issue of technique or style. Fine (1998:138) describes and critiques the disembodied writing style which carries no body or voice and appears to 'come from nowhere.' In addition Clandinin and Connelly (1998:153, 156) point out the grounding of social sciences in humans, their relations and their experience, and point out there can be an importance to drawing attention to the "I" who speaks. The issue is not straight forward and Richardson (1998:349) puts the dilemma succinctly:

Homogenization occurs through the suppression of individual voice...How do we put ourselves in our own texts, and with what consequences? How do we nurture our own individuality and at the same time lay claim to "knowing" something? These are both philosophically and practically difficult problems.

(Richardson 1998:349)

Some of these writers certainly come from further into the constructivist camp than is consistent with my own 'soft' constructivist position and they make the points more forcibly than I would. However this discussion illustrates the tension between too much and too little 'I'.

The position I have arrived at for this text is to adopt a more conventional third person style for much of the discussion and analysis chapters (1,2,3 and 6,7). In those places such a style lends itself to the standing back from the research a step or two, subjecting it to scrutiny and relating it to wider theories. A more personal presence is maintained in the other chapters (4 and 5) where, as the researcher, I am implicated as both actor and constructor of the tale. This is most obviously the case with the minor case BUDD. Such a compromise seeks to spotlight my own footprints in terrain where it would seem disingenuous to disguise them. At the same time it is hoped that a more detached role elsewhere provides a more accessible style for the reader.

3.3.9 Conclusion

In this chapter some of the methodological issues implicated in the empirical research were examined and the research design set out. This was concluded by examining some of the complexities encountered in practise. The next two chapters present the findings from the six detailed cases and two minor illustrative studies.

Chapter 4:

Case Studies from Voluntary Organisations

This chapter presents the first half of the results from the investigation. Each case is presented in turn with some amount of analysis within each presentation. A more detailed analysis follows in chapter 6. The cases presented here are:

Case 1:

4.1 Ormiston Children and Families Trust

A regional children's charity.

Case 2:

4.2 Shelter

A national homelessness campaigning charity.

Case 3:

4.3 St Mungo's

A regional charity working with the street homeless.

Case 4:

4.4 Brighton Urban Design and Development (BUDD):

Contrasting minor case - a small informal organisation.

4.1 Ormiston Children and Families Trust

The Cliche: Poor kids on the block

Their Banner: Putting Children First

4.1 Ormiston Overview

4.1.1 Introduction

The Ormiston Children and Families Trust (Ormiston, for short) is a registered charity working with children and their families through 13 projects in disadvantaged areas in East Anglia. Their activity includes: work with parents on deprived housing estates, support for children of school age, support for prisoners' families and their children, and development work with young people. Ormiston also undertakes research work, writes publications and organises conferences and training, as part of its advocacy work on behalf of children and to enable it to influence regional and national policy. The projects are dispersed geographically around the region within a triangle encompassing Peterborough, Norwich and Great Yarmouth. The regional nature of Ormiston, with diverse project work in over a dozen locations means communication and integration are important issues.

Ormiston values the independence that it has to develop services which might be different from those provided within the statutory sector. It has few direct competitors in the voluntary sector in the region although there are national and very local organisations operating. The current funding climate, with government programmes particularly for pre-school work, is generally favourable but this 'rapidly changing funding environment' as the chief executive describes it (Ormiston Annual Review 2000), with a move away from grants to contracts, also poses some threats to the way that Ormiston wants to work. In this case study I examine some of the values and processes of reproduction in Ormiston within this funding climate, using a focus on equal opportunities and rights issues.

4.1.2 The Story of Ormiston

The Ormiston Trust was set up by a Suffolk family in 1969 in memory of Fiona Ormiston Murray who was killed in a car accident on her honeymoon. During the 1970s the trust developed a fund which led, in 1981, to the first project being established. The family have remained involved in the organisation to this day and Fiona's brother is still active as a trustee.

4.1.3 Ormiston Today

In the year 2000 the Ormiston Children and Families Trust had an income of £1.4m, about a quarter of which came from its sister organisation, the Ormiston Trust. Half of its income came from statutory and public agencies, with the remaining quarter counted as voluntary income (20%) or other income (5%). It could claim over 90% of income spent on direct charitable work, broken down as community based work (68%), prison work (9%) and children's sports and leisure (14%). It employed just under 100 staff including those in the 13 dedicated projects, the partnership projects with other agencies, and the senior management team. It has been an early leader in managing a Sure Start government programme, aimed at pre-school children, in Great Yarmouth.

Ormiston sees its work as based on the United Nations declaration on the Rights of the Child and its equal opportunities policy commits it to working for children in their context by taking account of the needs of the whole family, with 'family' taken to mean not merely blood ties but the child's important emotional relationships:

Children's and parents' ability to gain access to the services they need, varies hugely according to where they live...we find family poverty and disadvantage present - to different degrees - everywhere we work.

(Ormiston Children and Families Trust, Annual Review 2000)

At one Ormiston children and family centre, for example, the range of activities might include one-to-one advice, group work support for parents facing difficult situations, or courses in English and maths, cookery and art. Typically, a woman using such a project may have left a violent partner, or have lost access to her children, or be living in temporary accommodation and may be suffering with mental health problems or lack of income.

4.1.4 The Research

I was seeking a quality organisation which was seen to be close to its values and still working within a funding climate with some amount of grant income. Ormiston came recommended as a high quality organisation from my pilot survey of practitioners. Initially I interviewed a senior member of staff for this project, and found him thoughtful and reflective on the organisation's values. He was keen to avoid the organisation losing touch with its values as it grew, and was interested in organisational processes that enhanced its values. For the main part of my research I contacted Ormiston again and they were interested to be involved. My reasons for choosing Ormiston were as follows:

Firstly, Ormiston was operating in a funding climate that was still grants orientated

(although it was involved in government contracts too). Ormiston thus fitted as an organisation active in state or quasi-markets with an emphasis on public funding. Secondly, Ormiston fitted my base criteria in terms of size and length of establishment. Thirdly, it seemed likely that the organisational investment and commitment to using working groups which cut across project boundaries was a management strategy that might have an important bearing on maintenance of organisational values. Fourthly, it was recommended as an organisation undertaking quality work with children and families. Fifthly, they were receptive to being involved and were to address the issue of organisational values shortly.

My own experience at Ormiston perhaps mirrors something of their organisational ethos and style. I was carefully inducted into the organisation through a number of processes and was treated during the research period like a project in my own right. For example, I had a preliminary meeting in August 2000 with Martin, a senior staff member who was Head of Operations, and with my key contact, Rosalind, where we agreed an outline of how we would work together. We jointly determined an area of work which could provide the organisational site for examining organisational values (Fathers Work) although this subsequently changed due to staffing difficulties. In December 2000 Martin, Rosalind and I met again and we agreed that I would now examine the Equal Opportunities Group which was starting in the aftermath of race awareness training. This was intended to form the basis of a values example which would help in examining the reproduction of organisational values. Agreement was gained for me to attend several of those group meetings and at a latter date interview a range of staff one-to-one.

We discussed, at their suggestion, my role in the group and concluded that we would all be relaxed if I did not play a 'neutral observer role' but rather engaged and contributed where appropriate. In this sense I became an additional resource to the group and a quasi-insider. On one occasion, as part of discussions on race issues, I suggested and subsequently obtained a video about working on anti-racism in largely white areas, which we watched at group meeting. Minutes and agendas from the Equal Opportunities Group, were sent to me and there were opportunities to consult with Rosalind between meetings and to discussed my list of interviewees. Both Rosalind and Martin were keen on the planned cross-organisational seminar which aimed to bring together participants from the different case studies. They saw this as a good learning and networking opportunity and Rosalind attended this in November 2001. As Martin put it:

Retaining what is important and distinctive about Ormiston is something we are concerned with. There are pressures for us to expand: geographically and thematically. How we maintain - and of course - develop our core values - these questions are timely for us.

We also planned from the outset our ending. This was to be a feedback meeting to Ormiston toward the end of the research period (in fact I fed back both to the Equal Opportunities Group and to a team of 30 project managers in autumn 2001) and a final evaluation meeting with Mike and Rosalind (which happened in December 2001). This should illustrate several points about Ormiston: there was an attention to organisational processes, a professional approach to management, an orientation to learning and reflection, using opportunities that are presented. There was a congruence between the way I was treated as an outside researcher and the ways of working they seek to use internally.

Between January and October 2001 I had briefing and de-briefing meetings with Rosalind and Mike, attended three meetings of the Equal Opportunities Group, provided a feedback session to the Equal Opportunities Group and undertook a half day exercise on Ormiston's organisational values to the Senior Practitioners Group, composed of project managers and senior managers, to check out my findings. The six staff whom I interviewed on a one-to-one basis, apart from **Martin**, head of operations, were at different levels in the organisation: **Rosalind** (practice manager at a regional base), **Janet** (communications manager at regional office), **Robert** (practice manager of prison work), **Sally** (project manager, children and family centre), **Kathy** (project worker), **Jes**, project worker. I also had a group discussion with eight project users, and collected and read several reports, leaflets and annual reports produced by the organisation.

Doing things 'the Ormiston Way' was a phrase I often heard while researching Ormiston. What follows is a summary of some of the discoveries made over a period of ten months during 2001 about Ormiston, its values and some of the insights about how these might be reproduced.

Ormiston and Organisational Values

4.1.5 Espoused Values at Ormiston

Ormiston Children and Families Trust describes itself in its mission statement (1997) as working '...to uphold the rights of children and to enhance the quality of the lives of children, young people and their families.'

The same document, under **values**, sets out five statements of **beliefs**. These include children:

- having the right to grow up in a secure and caring environment
- seeing the family as concerning a quality of mutual support and care rather than necessarily a blood tie
- the right of children to be listened to

- how parents, carers and children should be able to make choices
- the need for information, resources and services to act on those choices.

Ormiston, **also under values**, affirms the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Some of the **methods and style of work** are also indicative of some of the underlying organisational values - including 'establishing an overriding commitment to quality throughout the operation of the projects' and 'ensuring a high commitment to sustaining resources for the development and training of paid and voluntary staff.'

The Equal Opportunities Policy (revised July 1997), which was being reviewed in the group I took part in during 2001, states in its introduction that the aim is to ensure that communities where Ormiston works have both 'access' to Ormiston's facilities and 'the highest quality of care within them.' The organisation aims to set an atmosphere where parents and carers can 'participate', where there is 'diversity and choice' and where people can develop to their full potential. Ormiston is committed to challenging its own prejudices and challenging discrimination in other people and agencies. Monitoring its own work and consulting project users are seen as vital processes toward the achievement and realisation of these aims and beliefs.

The espoused statements contain many references to the **rights** of children, young people and their families, an emphasis on **listening** to them, and on their ability to make their own **choices**. There is an **implied** set of values here, in operational terms, that assumes that poor and disadvantaged children have fewer of their rights realised, have fewer choices, and need more listening to. Attention to the effect of poverty and disadvantage on their rights is made directly in the statement in the annual review cited in 1.3 above.

4.1.6 Key Stakeholders' Accounts of Values at Ormiston

Rosalind summed up Ormiston as being an 'organisation that works for equity and people in disadvantage.' Sally could see ways in which the values take shape in practice, for example by enabling parents to develop their skills, perhaps in working alongside them in contacting a statutory agency so that they can gain greater choice and power over their lives:

...it is our way of working with families - it is about enabling children and families to make positive choices in their lives. It is about the advocacy, the learning aspect too...you are skilling parents to enable them to make positive choices....Even the one-to-one work we do with families and children enables them to access other organisations. It is about enskilling them to go through that process.

Staff I spoke to also valued the congruence of Ormiston. There were process values

concerned with the support and back up that they were given by senior staff, which they in turn modelled to other staff and project users. This was a feature of the way the organisation believed it should work, and it led to a sense in which the values had become tacit or embedded in the service. In the following extract, for example, Kathy expresses the way that several of the various dimensions of the Ormiston values come together: there is an *experiencing* of the values not just being *told* them, there is a congruence felt from senior managers, and the values are embedded in the work itself:

...I would be listened too ...They [senior staff] would go out of their way to help...When they say things about the practice - you believe it because you have experienced it. There's trust. If you work for an organisation where it is all 'I believe, I believe' you would remember in your head...you find this with schools sometimes: they say 'our policy is this or that' but they haven't got the belief in the whole team...they don't actually do it because they have not had to experience it...

Later on in that same interview Kathy was discussing some of the formal organisational values, and she insisted that Ormiston's values were not just something written on paper. She even suggested that while many agencies might have similar espoused values, the point about Ormiston was that the organisation's values were something done in the act of practice:

...I even looked at them before I came today and I thought 'oh.' It has to be on paper...but...the organisation is an active working organisation - it is what the people do and how we do it. Just seeing all that on paper it seems formal...when you are in there we don't look it up - and we don't stand up and do speeches 'Ormiston believes - ' ...it is very much hands on and showing. We could stand up in conferences and say 'Ormiston believes this that and the other' but then most people would say 'well yes but so does everybody else' because it has been written since time forgot. But ours is very much in the practice.

She then went on to describe tacit values, how 'the Ormiston Way' is something she has picked up, she can't say what this is, but she knows it and in certain situations acts on it:

I think these are very Ormiston ways - don't ask me what they are - I just feel I have picked them up over the years. I haven't realised I have got them until I go somewhere else to another conference - and it just something that happens - it is strange.

A newer staff member was not sure about Ormiston's values. She felt they were

unclear and were only something that people who had been around for a longer while understood. Indeed, getting to understand the 'Ormiston Way' was seen by some as a process that could take up to 10 years. Nevertheless, on an issue such as child protection this particular worker said she knew what the approach should be. Others pointed out that even if you did not know the values, somehow you behaved in accordance with them, as if you knew.

In a group discussion, women project users at an Ormiston centre talked about what they valued about the project. They emphasised in different ways that they felt respected and that Ormiston did not seem like a large uncaring bureaucratic organisation:

'They treat you like human beings.'

'You get treated on a one-to-one basis. They care.'

'They are not just there because it is their job, they are genuine, they really want to be there.'

'Say, J, she is lovely, so supportive...'

I asked them what was their impression when they came through the door. They appreciated the nature of Ormiston as non-judgmental and some of them compared experiences with statutory services which they had found bullying. Something of the nature of an independent voluntary organisation concerned with rights was, I felt, being expressed and valued in these comments:

'You are not walking into an organisation here are you? You are walking into something different -'

'You can get social services. They are just basically bullying -'

'There isn't any judge here. You know social services can be like that.'

'I had all that black eyes, broke my nose, bit my finger in half...You're not here on your own'

Kathy saw the work as being very different in respective projects; so while holding the same non-judgmental values the projects were not identical, or clones, as she expressed it:

If you go to each project every one of those is very different in character. We're not clones.

4.1.7 Types of Values at Ormiston

The espoused values of Ormiston have been illustrated as being concerned with social progress values seeking to gain rights, justice and equality for disadvantaged children and families. In addition to these **social progress values** there are **process-orientated**

values, toward an emphasis on quality of work. The statements on **equality of opportunity** imply both of these kinds of values, in that they refer both to desired outcomes (people gaining the opportunity to develop their full potential) and processes of working together (involving users through consultation and monitoring services, for example). **Behavioural values**, emphasising caring, support and respect are also expressed. It is also true to see some of the values underpinning the way staff work at Ormiston as **professional values**, in that they are linked into a professional practice of working with project users.

Factors Affecting Values at Ormiston

4.1.8 People Processes and Value carriers

The focus in this section is on the notion of value carriers which I first identified while researching Ormiston. Many people could be identified as having a particular guardian role in terms of the organisation's values; these include the chief executive, Martin as operations manager, Rosalind as practice manager, and a variety of people sprinkled around the projects. Sometimes these individuals would be explicitly identified. Martin cited five practice managers as important for maintaining values, amongst them Rosalind and Robert. Robert was a practice manager with responsibility for the work that Ormiston undertakes in prisons, and had been employed for over 11 years. He was seen as 'keen to be a driver of values in the organisation.' I take these to be people who are particularly *conscious* of the organisational values. Robert provides an example to show this phenomenon in action. This was evident in three aspects, firstly a preparedness to challenge in organisational forums (in this case the task group on equal opportunities), secondly, a readiness to challenge in inter-organisational settings, and thirdly an awareness of other staff holding the values within a particular project.

Taking the Equal Opportunities Group first, Robert, along with other staff, was keen to see how the policy could be kept alive as an active document. Reviewing the policy would be important, but realising it in action would be more important. Attaching a budget line to activities in the policy was one route that Robert saw:

How do we make sure the policy is used? ...it is important to keep it alive, not have it left on the shelf...it probably needs reviewing, this can keep it alive,...keeps it in people's mind...The Child Protection Policy is an active document but I think the Equal Opportunities document isn't really. Maybe we won't want to change it much, but looking at it can help keep it alive...I'd [also] like to add in 'possible funding'.

The second aspect is inter-organisational. In Robert's own work in the prison, sensitively challenging the prison regime was seen as important to protect the organisational values. He saw enabling families to keep in contact while a parent, usually a father, was in prison as an important part of Ormiston's values. For both the prison and Ormiston, the visitor's centre is something like an organisation within an organisation – but the two share very different values and organisational cultures. The prison has security as its top priority, works through a clear hierarchy and staff wear uniforms. The Ormiston Prison Visitor's Centre that I visited lies in the shadow of the prison but is keen to create a welcoming atmosphere for parents and children before they enter the prison. The demarcation is illustrated by the way that prison staff rarely come into the Centre, perhaps feeling it is not 'their territory.' Conflicts between the two do occur; sometimes, for example, the Centre may advocate on behalf of a visitor who has come a long way with children but arrived late for the start of visiting hours. A particular incident over policy illustrates the way Ormiston needs to remain alert to its values and to try to maintain them even in constraining locations.

Robert described how prison staff wanted to see children's visits as a perk for the best prisoners, those who had 'enhanced' status because of their good behaviour. Robert argued strongly against the idea that visits should be seen a privilege for those on such an 'enhanced' status. While accepting the case for not allowing those prisoners who had broken rules to have visits, he argued that those on 'standard' status should retain access. He argued too that it was the child's right to maintain contact – this should not be seen as a perk for especially good behaviour on the part of the prisoner. This view prevailed, but on difficult ground; the prison retains the power to discontinue visits on security grounds.

The third aspect to be illustrated here is how there might be value carriers within the project itself. This can perhaps be characterised as the difference between those who do the job effectively and identify with the project, and those who take on the organisation and volunteer for groups and wider discussions. Robert saw it this way:

...they would all say they work for Ormiston but to varying degrees. Some of the staff here are very familiar with Ormiston's values. For others it is about being more suited to being in the visitor's centre and managing that process. They are not quite as sure of our values.

To some extent this was determined by position in the hierarchy, according to Robert, with sessional staff probably seeing themselves as working more for the visitor's centre than Ormiston as a whole. Robert felt the link to Ormiston was stronger in childcare work where there were links to cross-organisational mechanisms like the Child Protection

Group. These facilitated a clear connection to the whole organisation, making it easier to assimilate organisational values. For Robert the process was an active choice that staff made:

I think you chose to do it or you don't. I have seen staff definitely make the choice to do it...To be an Ormiston employee. To link into the values. To put themselves forward for the practice group, to want to interlink to the other parts of the organisation. I think that is what I always wanted to do. I didn't just want to know about...managing the visitors centre...

A final area to highlight here is that one part of developing value carriers and instilling the 'Ormiston Way' was through long induction and learning processes (described by one interviewee as 'laborious but necessary'), as well as through regular supervision processes, which were part of a highly professionalised management approach.

We have seen the kind of role such value carriers can play through examining one example. There are several threats to values that could be suggested here, such as senior staff leaving. Certainly the chief executive was cited as important for carrying values, as indeed was Martin. Too few 'carriers of the message' across the organisation as it expands, too long a learning time of Ormiston values, and an encroaching contract culture could all pose threats.

4.1.9 External Advocates

The role of external advocates was identified in other cases: people not formerly connected to an organisation but who may advocate or support it at certain moments. There were two varieties at Ormiston, although they were less overt than in some organisations. Firstly, Martin explained there were many highly senior professionals, with expertise in Ormiston's areas of interest, living in the region and this has served as a recruiting ground for board members. Such persons known to the organisation may also play less structured roles as supporters or providers of information. The other group is the Ormiston family and its social networks in the region, which might reasonably be expected to play supportive roles towards the organisation in the event of a crisis.

4.1.10 Informal Processes

Less evidence of the importance of informal processes reached me at Ormiston than in other organisations. This may be not because such processes do not exist, indeed the long established staff might be expected to have social links, but there are a number of other factors which may be just as important. Firstly, there is a professionalised management

structure, including supervision meetings and project meetings, which provide linkages. Secondly, there are cross-project working groups and training events which provide opportunities for informal links. Thirdly, most of the practice happens in relatively small project bases, widely dispersed geographically. My sense was that Ormiston may need to develop this range of structures to act in place of informal processes which might happen more spontaneously in less dispersed organisations.

4.1.11 Organisational Structures

There are a number of organisational structures which may support organisational values such as project meetings, supervision processes for staff, practice managers' meetings and senior practitioners' meetings, board meetings involving trustees and some senior staff. The mechanism to be examined first is the cross-project groups, sometimes called 'task groups' or 'working groups', which are a feature of the Ormiston working method.

4.1.12 Cross-organisational Groups

These groups have in the past had a training component - sharing practice for example - although they are now orientated more to policy development. Here staff meet to undertake specific organisational development tasks, such as in the Child Protection Working Group or the Equal Opportunities Working Group. I took part in the Equal Opportunities Group for a four month period. There are several reasons why these groups are of interest here. Firstly, they bring together staff from different projects. Secondly, they bring together staff from different layers in the hierarchy, so a given project representative might be a project manager, deputy or project worker. Thirdly, they are playing an active role in reviewing, assessing and developing policy or practice. At their best they are reflective opportunities within the organisation - and staff are expected to feedback to their respective projects the discussion and decisions that have taken place.

The groups provide a place where staff and managers explore and literally 'make sense' (Weick 1995) of problematic situations in the workplace. The result is that staff across the organisation are involved in shaping best organisational practice, say on race and inequalities, and thereby gain a high level of ownership of policy. These kinds of cross-linking project groups in an organisation are a characteristic of network or task style organisational cultures described by Handy (1988). Many in Ormiston acknowledge both that these consultative group processes are expensive (in terms of staff time) and that they can mean policy and practice development is relatively slow. The trade-off can be a high degree of ownership, as decisions and practice are diffused through the organisation. It was

noteworthy here that there remained within these groups a questioning attitude to their effectiveness, with a concern to find processes that would make them function better.

Organisations can often find such groups easier to conceive than to maintain. One of the senior staff, Janet, owned frankly some of the difficulties, as well as acknowledging the importance of these groups. She pointed to a difficult period with front line staff facing problems over cover, time to attend, travel and opportunity costs. Making the meetings feel worthwhile and accessible to disparate staff groups could also be problematic. There was an informal agreement to try to gain a representative from most projects to each Working Group. Most of the people I spoke to felt that this happened, but that representatives changed from meeting to meeting endangering continuity. Janet emphasised the importance of energising these meetings because of their key policy development role. She saw them as playing a vital role in drawing the experience of staff's practice back into the organisation as a whole. The working groups also provided a way for staff and managers to nurture a cohesive approach across the organisation. For some staff, particularly from smaller projects, such groups provided informal support opportunities.

4.1.13 Core and Periphery

The organisation had a discernible 'core' to its work, represented by certain projects and central staff. So although all projects are encouraged to be involved in the organisation's work, there is a 'periphery' of more temporary or partnership projects, sometimes with only a few staff, as well as a large contracting operation via the government's Sure Start scheme. This may not be a deliberative strategy; it was described as an outcome of funding and inter-agency working. However such a structure may allow the core values of Ormiston to be protected from incursion by other agencies or contracting culture.

4.1.14 Management Committee

From my discussions it seemed that the board, made up of highly professional senior persons with a well respected chair, largely trusted the running of the organisation to the senior staff. I undertook a card exercise at the senior practitioners' feedback day, which had various statements about the organisation that I had picked up or deduced from my time in the organisation. Participants were asked to feed back their own comments. On one of them I had written: 'Ormiston has a distant management board' but the word 'distant' was subsequently deleted and 'important but not always visible' added. As Martin phrased it in our initial briefing:

Our trustees are partly senior professionals...part are from the Ormiston family. They are fairly removed from the operations, they meet 3 /4 times a year for 3 hour meetings. It would be interesting to see if they were able to articulate the Ormiston values!

This turned out to be a portentous quote, as an incident that occurred towards the end of my study illustrated. This showed the way that latent power in an organisation can potentially emerge to have an enormous influence over organisational values. A good and long relationship of trust had existed between the chair and chief executive. This worked well until the impending retirement of the chief executive. The recruitment of her replacement was perhaps the one task that could not be entrusted to the senior staff members to undertake. The board appointed a recruitment agency which, it appears, was not attuned to the Ormiston way and pursued an unhelpful direction. In the end an appointment was not made, and this led to a process of rethinking. It may however be indicative of how the board may not have fully absorbed some of the careful processes developed elsewhere in the organisation. Although this is the kind of decision that the board might only take once every 10 years it is a vital one and illustrates how the latent power of the board must necessarily be realised at this point. If the membership of the board is not inducted into organisational processes congruent with the way the organisation operates, there could be highly disruptive consequences for organisational values at some point.

4.1.15 Income Streams

Work with disadvantaged children and young people is located in public sector markets with contracting processes becoming more prevalent. Rosalind felt clear that contracts were going to become an issue. She astutely put it at our initial meeting: 'the danger is you just become outreach for other people's organisation.' One of the illustrations is the threat that Ormiston faced to its values by statutory monitoring processes and social services referrals.

One of the issues involved here was how apparently innocent mechanisms, such as monitoring requirements, could jeopardise Ormiston's particular approach to building a trusting relation with the user:

Rosalind:...we have a project which has got a service level agreement...and we're filling in the boxes to make sure we get the funding and it is something we have had before but the agreement is not the same...so there are all sorts of requirements for us to report. This would mean we would be making judgments about the families which use the centre, ticking the boxes as to whereabouts the families fit within the

model...We are not an organisation that does that...

She went on to point out how contracting requirements 'sneak up' incrementally:

...it is quite invidious because you do start to fill in the boxes, and you suddenly find the whole process has snuck up on you and bit by bit, you have actually moved in that direction almost without being aware of it...a lot of it seems quite harmless at the time...and then gradually you realise you have filled in 20 pages of boxes. The whole thing grows...then you realise you have gone down that road.

Rosalind went on to explain how this worked and how it could compromise Ormiston's values. In a voluntary children's organisation like Ormiston staff may get much closer to families and parents may confide more than in a statutory counterpart. Project users, for example, are often well aware of statutory organisation's legally defined powers. The potential to be adversely judged by a statutory provider has serious implications, which could lead, in extreme cases, to a parent losing access to their children. The level of project user-staff trust may, therefore, be quite different in a voluntary organisation, and there was some evidence of this in the project users' comments made in 2.2. That confidence and trust can be built upon, leading to positive outcomes for project users. This trust must, however, be respected, understood and in some cases defended. Ormiston faces incursions then by statutory organisations seeking information or recording of details which could jeopardise the relationship of trust just described.

One approach to try to counter this was explained by Sally. She found it important to start discussions with statutory workers by revisiting Ormiston's philosophy. She would explain that when a family approached an Ormiston centre the aim was to work with the whole family in a collaborative way, to support them for a long period of time with the family always having the right to withdraw from the centre. This approach could often be in conflict with a target driven style, evident in many social services departments, aimed at reducing numbers on the child protection register. Social services might seek a 6 month conference review and then, depending on how well a person had engaged at Ormiston, remove them from the register thus closing the case. These factors of difference had to be continually reinforced in Ormiston's discussions with statutory agencies. One solution being considered was doing a piece of work that evaluated families' experience rather than accepting form filling.

An essential condition underlining these activities is that they take place within a voluntarist framework. People come to the project out of choice and should be free to withdraw if they wish. This can be difficult to maintain when working with colleagues from a statutory department operating with different values, duties and priorities. Quite small

matters can be manifestations of some fundamental differences between an independent voluntary organisation and a statutory provider. Sally described some of the day-to-day ways in which she managed the tension between whether a person was *introduced* (a voluntarist notion) or *referred* (with expectations of set interventions being undertaken) to their centres.

Sally emphasised that it can be hard for statutory services to accept that while referrals to a Centre are not accepted, introductions are welcome. A referral comes with a label saying that there is an expectation that something specific is going to happen. An introduction is different - implying a process whereby the service user has much more control. When a person is introduced to the Centre there will be a discussion about what they need and how staff can help. Statutory workers were seen by Sally as having a very direct way of working: 'here is the problem and this is what we are going to do.'

There was a second dilemma for Sally here. Although issues on 'introductions not referrals' might be explicit in funding agreements with statutory bodies, in practice it is often necessary to explain this approach again with front line staff. Ormiston often has dual relations with statutory organisations. It may receive funding from one arm of the agency and then work in a neighbourhood alongside staff from another arm. Ormiston seeks to remain alert to managing such inter-organisational relations effectively at both levels, to maintain its distinctive approach.

Rosalind felt that another strategy to avoid the dilemmas of contracting culture was to have diverse income sources, so that Ormiston would not be forced to sign agreements. She summed up a crucial difference between standing up for Ormiston's values, and simply taking on a social service model - a difference around rights:

...the difference is that we are a voluntary organisation working to uphold people's rights - we are not there to make a judgment on people's lives, to make a judgment about what category they are, or what their level of need is that therefore triggers this particular service or social work intervention. That isn't what we do. It's holding that.

As an organisation that gains a quarter of its income from its sister trust there is a measure of financial independence. This may give confidence and a sounder footing to the organisation's negotiating stance.

A final point to make here is that Ormiston staff can identify few 'competitors' or 'peer' organisations in their sector and it does appear that there are few comparable regional organisations at present. In this sense, Ormiston is operating in a niche funding market unencumbered by regional voluntary sector 'competitors.' This may offer more

scope to create its own organisational processes and to assert its own distinctive values.

4.1.16 Social Movements

Are there associated social movements which Ormiston draws on to sustain or grow its values? We have seen how Ormiston has values connected with social justice and rights. Nevertheless its connection to these movements is, in my estimation, less direct than some of the other organisations examined in this thesis. In making that assertion, it is suggested that the weight of those justice and rights issues largely comes into the organisation mediated through more professionalised routes: from professional best practice, research work, and networks of voluntary organisations. This may be because Ormiston is working close to organisations embedded in social and community work traditions and in association with other agencies. It is a practice based organisation concerned with advocacy, rather than an overtly campaigning organisation.

As an example I asked how the race awareness had arisen as an issue - where did this initiative come from and why? Janet felt that there was a mixture of drivers: the Equal Opportunities Task Group initiated the work (on this there seems broad agreement), supervision processes have sparked action, but the political climate has an influence:

Janet: It is difficult to pinpoint...issues emerge. It was tied down at an Equal Opportunities Group - I remember us discussing it - that we needed the [race awareness] training and it felt a subject we weren't able to look at on our own. I do have a sense of it just coming through as an issue... Sometimes you sense there is a climate for things...because they are on the social or political agenda...

Although Janet does not say this directly, there are managed decision making processes to prioritise issues that arise. It should be added that, at the time of conducting these interviews, the situation of refugees and asylum seekers was receiving increasing coverage in the popular press, often of a negative kind. As was pointed out in their Annual Review document, Ormiston may work on issues even if they are unpopular.

A priority need over the coming months will be to find ways of supporting refugee children and migrant families...Their needs may compare to the Vietnamese community successfully settled in East Anglia 20 years ago, but public attitudes to their presence do not.

(Ormiston Annual Review 2000)

We can see how the notion of 'social needs' and 'rights and justice' merge within the framework of a practice based 'doing' organisation like Ormiston. Social movements

have an effect, but Ormiston would not, I think, claim to be a campaigning organisation in the manner of, say, Greenpeace. The ways that these movements cross into the organisation are necessarily different.

A Values Example at Ormiston

4.1.17 The Equal Opportunities Group

The work of the Equal Opportunities Group is now examined. This group set itself a range of tasks for 2001. Two items were focussed on in this study: reviewing the equal opportunities policy and building on the race awareness work.

The importance of making the policies real and lived was a continual concern for staff in the Equal Opportunities Group. A questionnaire review of implementation of the policy in projects took place, undertaken by two members of the group. The results revealed that the main equal opportunities training for most people had been the race awareness training organised in October 2000, with three project based training events and four events aimed at volunteers or users. Six of the 15 respondents had reported no occasion in the last 12 month when they had used the equal opportunities policy. The report pointed out:

This has highlighted the fact that in some projects the policy is still rather an inactive document, rather than being lived out on a daily basis.

(Equal Opportunities Sub-group Questionnaire Brief Report: August 2001:2)

Robert was not alone in his concern that sometimes the equal opportunities policy was not being put into practice. Other group members were concerned to find mechanisms that would enable feedback from the group to reach projects. Reports back and minutes were seen as only the most basic solution. This concern to make the policy meaningful was a feature of most of the discussion in the group. There was certainly a recognition that implementation had not been as effective as with other policies such as child protection. Jess recognised a lack of implementation and felt that lack of resources played some role in this:

...a little bit ambiguous really. This is what local families have picked up. You talk about diversity, access, enabling etc then how come there is no budget for any of these leaflets in any of the major languages?

The lack of resources seemed generally recognised and was identified as an issue to be addressed in the work programme of the group. Resources, however, were not the only

issue. The following extract from the group illustrates something of the determination to realise the values of the race work, by building a model of practice that could diffuse through the organisation:

Rosalind: ...I feel there's a need for us to ensure that we do locate this work [of this group] in the basic values of Ormiston.... I think we need to reflect back...to always see if what we are doing fits onto existing policies.

...

Jess: Yes and we need to make it live, not just dry documents.

Rosalind: ...So we need to make sure it's not seen as the Equal Opportunities Group is holding race, separate from everything else... we are working towards a model of practice.

Avril: Yes and how do we disseminate to the organisation. You can of course say, 'oh this was agreed and so on'.. How do we get round this?

Jan: Yes, it's not owned if we do that.

This is clearly a process that has been developed before by Ormiston. Kathy saw that training had been used in the organisation and 'Ormistonised.' Speakers or trainers were brought in to provide expertise but there was always a slot for relating it directly to Ormiston. In time the training became taken over by the organisation and fully assimilated. With the race awareness work this was still in the early stages but the same process was envisaged and the August report from the group emphasised examining 'ways of developing our own "in-house" style of training.'

The way that practice around equal opportunities values might be reproduced and diffused is illustrated by the following response, made in a discussion concerning the difficulty of bringing volunteers who are involved a few hours a week, on board with the values of equalities. These comments from Jess indicated that learning about the organisation's values did not have to be through formal training:

It has to come from trust...how things are done in practice is the issue. It could be a short thing, five minutes, in a conversation. A feeling that it is a huge issue, the values, it makes you feel inadequate, how to get all this over to people.

This also illustrates the way that the Working Group itself was a place to develop and learn from practice sharing.

4.1.18 Diffusing Equal Opportunities across Projects and Workplaces

Related to the previous discussion was a desire to ensure that equal opportunities, and race awareness in particular, was diffused across the projects. Janet recognised the importance of cross-fertilising 'bees', as she called them: people who could draw the values across the boundaries of individual projects:

...There is lots coming up for people, how can we make it clear what we are discussing? Child protection for example is discussed at the project, equal opportunities, anti-racism is related to this, and it is emotional stuff. Who are the bees doing the cross-fertilising of these ideas?

There was no expression in the group of a need for drastic revisions to the policy. However, as Rosalind had said, there was a need to bring the policy more in line with shifts in emphasis that had occurred in the organisation reflecting wider changes in practice in the field. Janet expected there to be subtle revisions to the policy to reflect that change and to bring it closer to other Ormiston practice and the wider mission:

...as we highlighted this morning in the Equal Opportunities policy group, I don't think there are many places in the Mission and Values statement where this is a problem...This was written very much when it was all about 'care' and 'we provide the service for you.' ...we would probably want to move away from. It is subtle...I would predict that we will only end up tinkering with it...

Rosalind pointed out in the group how the process of integrating equal opportunities values was 'not complete, ever, it is a journey'; this showed something of the awareness of the need for continuous attention to, and reflection on, practice. Elsewhere Kathy had a striking perception that values were in the process of transformation, there was not a fixed state. As new issues emerged, even if the 'old' values were still there and useful, it was as if they were then built upon. In an illuminating allusion to some of Giddens' work on social reproduction she put it this way:

With the values we are always looking at new ones...with the young people we are asking questions with our pilot - the old [values] still remain but society changes and you have to start looking at 'these are our values but we don't stick to these for the next 25 years, things may change' therefore we need to add - not take away because they are still our underlying values full-stop because traditions go on - but they are always looking at things to add.

There is an expression here of values as growing from previous values as part of the on-going reproduction and transformation of social practice.

4.1.19 Additional Points on Equal Opportunities

There are some additional points of interest on values reproduction within the working group. The first is the way that modelling and congruence on values worked down the hierarchy. This seems to have had an effect in reinforcing values in 'showing by doing.' This may be semi-tacit to some staff, and even some senior staff to whom I mentioned this felt pleased but were slightly surprised at this feedback. The backing of senior staff has been crucial in the equal opportunities process: the group is managed by Rosalind, a practice manager, and the work would not be proceeding without this senior support. Finally there is the idea of transformation of values - values in this light are more like debates than carved artifacts, which are susceptible to incremental improvement and revision in their application

4.1.20 Preliminary Assessment of Values Reproduction at Ormiston

A preliminary assessment is presented here of the factors which may be weighing in favour of Ormiston reproducing its organisational values around social progress issues.

On '**people issues**' the organisation has had a very stable staff team at senior level who are committed to the value base. There appear to be sufficient **value carriers** at different levels of the organisation. Not everyone may be 'on board' with the values, but perhaps enough are, amongst them people who have been in the organisation many years, knowing the 'Ormiston way' and acting as 'carriers of the message.' There is also a discernible **modelling of values** from senior to junior staff and this congruence was something I experienced myself as a researcher. There is a sense in which the values are embedded in a way of working, in a daily practice, that staff may know **tacitly** 'the way' rather than always the words. Organisational values play a visible role in organisational life and people talk about them in relation to their practice. **External advocates** are less obvious in Ormiston's case, but may be spread through the Ormiston family as well as through associated professional people in the region who may be called upon to serve on the board. **Informal processes** seemed to play less of a role at Ormiston perhaps because of its location in professional working practices, and because there were more structures where interaction and **values debate** might occur.

In respect of **organisational structures**, there are a range of cross-cutting groups (the Equal Opportunities Group is one example) in which staff can be involved and which may enable them to influence and construct policy and practice beyond their own project base. These also provide opportunities to meet and get to know other staff across the organisation. There are **long induction and learning processes**, described by one

respondent as 'laborious but necessary'. These are expensive processes but there does appear to be a commitment to investing in them. Learning the 'Ormiston way' may take 10 years. **Core and periphery:** the organisation has a discernible 'core' to its work represented by certain projects and central staff. Such a structure may help to protect the core values of Ormiston from incursion by other agencies or from the effects of contracting culture.

Ormiston operates in **public sector markets** which means that it is increasingly affected by **contract culture**, although the organisation has a voluntary income of 25% through its sister trust. The determining nature of **contracts is resisted** through vigilance to values in day-to-day practice, strategically through funding bids, proposing alternative arrangements (eg evaluation) and through constant negotiation. There is also evidence of the organisation operating in a **niche market**, with few direct competitors in East Anglia doing a comparable range of work. **Social movements** around poverty, justice and rights influence value reproduction at Ormiston although the effect may be indirect and mediated through a strong professionalism.

4.2 Shelter

The Cliche: ‘Cathy Come Home’

Their Banner: To provide practical support for anyone...who has a housing problem...to bring about long-term changes [to] prevent homelessness...

4.2 Shelter Overview

4.2.1 Introduction

Shelter is nationally known campaigning organisation formed in 1966 with a headquarters in London and an income of £26m in 2000. The organisation sees itself as both campaigning for long term change and providing direct help to the homeless.

On the campaigning side, Shelter has focussed on the government's plans announced in March 1999 to produce a Housing Green Paper, published in 2000 and due to be debated in 2002. It undertakes consultation with homeless people, academics, politicians and voluntary organisations to establish key issues around homelessness and to engage in the political process to seek change. The direct services side of Shelter includes over 59 Housing Aid Centres around the country with over 350 staff employed in the Housing Services Department. A 10 year partnership with the Citizen's Advice Bureaux has been established to provide specialist housing advice to local agencies through the National Homelessness Advice Service (NHAS). Over 25 of the housing aid centres have developed contracts with the Community Legal Service, a government initiative launched in 2000.

4.2.2 The Story of Shelter

Shelter was launched by an advertisement in the Times which sparked a national campaign. The language of that first advertisement was urgent, picturing a homeless family, and speaking with fervour of a crisis that needed immediate attention:

This family is one of three million in Britain condemned to spend Christmas Day in slums...This is an emergency...Old folk are spending their last days alone in grim conditions. Thousands of children are in the care of the State... Shelter is a rescue operation...a campaign to mobilise money, hands and hearts to bring emergency relief to Britain's hidden homeless.

(The Times, 12th December 1966)

The press report that day described the Shelter campaign to raise £1 million a year

to help house Britain's homeless which Rev Bruce Kenrick said 'would enable the housing trusts to buy and convert £6 million worth of houses a year to house between 15,000 and 20,000 a year.' This launch came less than 3 weeks after the television showing of a drama cum documentary entitled 'Cathy Come Home.' Shelter thus started as an organisation devoted both to campaigning for, and delivery to, homeless people.

4.2.3 Shelter Today

At the time of the research Shelter employed 500 staff, 70% of whom were deployed in the Housing Services Department, which can be considered the delivery side of the organisation, and which at £12.1m accounted for nearly half the organisation's expenditure. As a whole, Shelter had diverse income streams including donations and legacies at £14.7m (57% of its annual income), income from shops at £5.6m while merchandising, training and publications contributed nearly £1m. Meanwhile grants from local and central government (£4m), and contracts from the Legal Services Commission stood at 0.5m. These figures are important in illustrating the degree of voluntary income of the organisation, reckoned to be nearly 80% by one senior Shelter manager. This compares highly favourably with comparable organisations in the top 10 of fundraising charities ranked by income. For example The Salvation Army, Barnados, Save the Children and Red Cross, all with significant service delivery, held a voluntary income in the range 48 - 52% of total income. Two organisations had comparable voluntary income, with Oxfam at 75% and Help the Aged at 89% (Charities Aid Foundation 1995:143). These figures suggest that Shelter had by far the highest voluntary income of the three charitable organisations studied here. Voluntary income is money not tied to specific projects, sometimes called 'free money.' If degree of voluntary income were to be an important determinant of propensity to maintain organisational values, Shelter would be expected to find this easiest by far.

4.2.4 The Research

I had originally chosen Shelter in order to have a campaigning organisation amongst my cases. As described in chapter 3 I found it hard to locate reasonably sized UK campaigning organisations prepared to take part in the study.

Although grants (at 15.4%) and contracts (2.7%) provide less than a fifth of the organisation's income they have had a large effect on parts of the delivery of housing advice in what is the largest department: Housing Services.

Between March and June 2001, I interviewed four managers, including a regional manager (Tessa, Gary, Tamsin, Cheryl), in Housing Services around England. I followed this up by talking to three staff at the headquarters in London with roles in Housing

Services including one in the senior management team (Imogen, Elliot, Tanya). I also spoke to one person who had worked in the homelessness field but was now in a senior position in a different sector, who wished to remain anonymous (Errol). All names have been changed.

Shelter and Organisational Values

4.2.5 Espoused Values at Shelter

Shelter describes itself as having three main aims:

1. to prevent and alleviate homelessness by providing information, advice and advocacy for people with housing problems.
2. To pilot innovative schemes which will provide new solutions for homelessness and housing problems.
3. To campaign for lasting changes to housing policy practice.

(Annual Report 1999/2000)

During the period of undertaking the research, Shelter's vision and values statement was being re-written, although I was told that this was more a matter of updating the terminology than anything substantive. It is noteworthy that the organisational mission and values were last written in 1992, which may be considered a short time for changing values. In view of some of the struggles to maintain values that I encountered, I wanted, in this case, briefly to compare parts of the old and revised statements. This lends some support to the views of my informant from outside the organisation, Errol, who felt that there was a reduction in strength of campaign work against homelessness.

1 (a) Original intentions (1966): Shelter is a rescue operation...a campaign to mobilise money, hands and hearts to bring emergency relief to Britain's hidden homeless.

1 (b) Causes of homelessness (1992): [Shelter] believes that homelessness is the result of a failed housing system. ...To be without a home is unacceptable. It is degrading and damaging...

1 (c) Causes of homelessness (2002): It is unacceptable that so many people suffer the misery of homelessness...Many of the causes of homelessness and poor housing are structural and are a result of a poor housing policies, inequality, poverty, discrimination and a lack of support...

2 (a) Original intentions (1966): [to]...enable the housing trusts to buy and convert £6 million worth of houses a year to house between 15,000 and 20,000 a year.

2 (b) Aims of Shelter (1992): We will extend our practical work in the short term to assist people in immediate need. ...we believe that in the long term homelessness

will only be eliminated by the creation of a housing system that: meets needs; is affordable; is fair to all sections of society is socially and economically sustainable...As an organisation we recognise that we can on only achieve our long term aims through effective management and promoting equality of opportunity in the widest sense

2 (c) Aims of Shelter (2002): Shelter has two aims... to provide practical support and innovative solutions for anyone who is homeless or who has a housing problem. The second is to use the evidence gathered from this work to bring about long-term changes that reduce and prevent homelessness...Shelter recognises that we can only achieve these aims by promoting equality of opportunity, by safeguarding our integrity and independence and through effective management.

Clearly (a) is not directly comparable, arising as it does from a newspaper advert rather than a considered long term text. Nevertheless the direct language, the urgency and the clarity of targets is striking. My own interpretation here is of a subtle degradation between 1(b) and 1(c), with a more emollient language emerging. A 'failed housing system' and homelessness as 'unacceptable' and 'degrading' has become a recognition that 'many' of the causes are 'structural' 'it is unacceptable that so many people' are in this position. Similarly in the second statements, the desire for both campaigning and service delivery aims is restated, but the sense of creating a 'fair' housing system has become 'gathering evidence' to 'reduce and prevent homelessness.' My argument is that these espoused statements reveal a shift from attempts to assert notions of justice and rights to trying hard to make the situation better. Indeed it is difficult to see many mainstream government or policy units disagreeing with 2 (c).

What does this mean for espoused values? Like many such statements, in both (b) and (c) there are a mixture of aims, beliefs, visions, values and methods. As a statement of belief, homelessness is seen as caused by housing policies, inequality, poverty, discrimination and lack of support. This is seen as 'unacceptable', an expression of values. A strategy to achieve certain aims is then set out - working out how to convince public and policy makers, demonstrating that change is possible by demonstration projects. Equality of opportunity and governance issues are then invoked and 'effective management' now appears in the newer statement. We should note there remains a commitment to provide assistance for 'anyone who is homeless or who has a housing problem.'

4.2.6 Key Stakeholders' Accounts of Values at Shelter

In this section staff's accounts of values at Shelter are examined. The argument, drawn from staff in Housing Services, is as follows. Campaigning in Housing Services had declined in favour of more attention to service, and services themselves had become more

structured and prescribed in the face of contracting culture. Some of the Shelter values within service delivery had been undermined in this process. In return, gains were reported in three areas: increased professionalism, better efficiency and greater financial income to the organisation.

Gary described conflicts around organisational values with little prompting. As a regional manager in a housing advice centre he had been in the organisation for nearly 10 years. Gary drew a distinction between espoused or 'official values', and the day-to-day work which was governed more by the operation of contracts with government agencies:

There are of course the 'official values.' If we do some work we have to do a plan and we have to say how it fits the values. This isn't too hard to do...We do always keep it in mind that we are here to assist and house badly housed or homeless people. I would say we do that, we do operate those values at an official level, but the day-to-day work is not necessarily the same thing...a key change has been in the contracts we run, so increasingly the day to day tasks are managing the contracts...[from] The Legal Services Commission (LSC) and the DETR - both government departments. It is quite tough meeting the targets they set. Sometimes I think - what are we actually doing?

He described how the contracts provided generous funding but were accompanied by onerous targets. Only certain clients in the advice service counted towards meeting these targets, which skewed the service to a particular group. This stood in contrast to Shelter's stated values of helping 'anyone' in housing need. At times the process of meeting the requirements of the funders seemed overwhelming to Gary:

We have to meet certain targets, and only work with certain people...the effect on our values is we have to operate a means test, and two levels of provision are developing, this is against our values really...I find myself asking during the day: 'how many people have we got in who are "eligible"?' I feel it's taking over...If we write a letter, that takes an hour, so those in the 'not eligible' category get a phone call, because that only takes 10 minutes.

This clearly had an effect on the worker at a personal level. The service was being distorted, it seems, in favour of requirements of funders, so that only some clients were being seen. Staff felt that this transgressed the organisational value of seeing anyone in housing need, by imposing 'a means test.' Organisational values around service were being directly challenged by the precepts of the funding bodies. Gary did, however, cite some improvements to the service, in terms of efficiency and professionalism, but he was aware of a downside 'a something that was being lost' and Gary now saw little difference

between his work and that of any mainstream organisation:

I feel we have done better work because of this, we have done more work, seen more people. But I feel I might as well be working as a legal solicitor or something sometimes!

There is a counter argument here. Elsewhere in the organisation, at headquarters, the constraining nature of the contracts was seen as less problematic. Staff there had been involved in agreeing the contracts and felt that they had been consulted. They considered that the priority targets of the contractor might be seen as reflecting to some degree those of Shelter. Elliot sits in the executive management team of Housing Services:

If we hadn't been so involved in the consultation setting things up it might have felt quite different. But the commission have been quite good at involving agencies - solicitors and not-for-profits - in the quality standards and the audits... they have given us a voice to say what we think.

Elliot here talks of what seems a much more constructive relationship with the contractee and he stresses involvement in how the service will work across a wide range of agencies.

The effects of this funding regime were not confined to one location. Elsewhere in Housing Services, Tamsin, a middle manager like Gary, made the same point concerning 'eligibility.' She identified certain disabled people who might not be in the eligible category but were in housing need. She described the conflict between keeping hold of these values in day-to-day practice, and the fiercer demands of funding requirements:

...we would tend to prioritise poorer people anyway but there are anomalies...so, for example, people on disabilities benefits are not eligible for legal help so if we increasingly receive our money from the Legal Services Commission it is inevitably going to put pressure on us advising people who don't fit into their categories...

She pointed out that some Housing Aid Centres had near exclusive funding from the LSC which meant even greater difficulty in providing a service that could advise all those in housing need. We might expect there to be values conflicts as pointed out and there are likely to be gaps between an imagined 'perfect' value and the ambiguous world of practice (Paton 1996:40). It is also interesting to note that staff in the regional advice centres felt strongly in favour of Shelter's written values on this issue.

A second values area investigated with staff was campaigning. I did not talk to the policy section of the organisation where 'campaigning' was located. Nevertheless it seemed

reasonable to suppose that there would be some link between staff undertaking advice work which might support campaigns. Indeed there was some evidence of this. One regional manager was positive about such a link:

Tessa: Recently there has been a Housing Services and Campaign Group set up so issues can be seen both bottom up and top down...Of course we probably suffer from communication problems like any larger organisation, but I think there are opportunities for debate.

However Tamsin pointed out that though officers had 'campaigning' written into their job descriptions, and were recruited with this interest in mind, campaigning had nonetheless become a discretionary part of the role:

...officers like ours, all of the staff have it in their job description to campaign, Shelter is a campaigning organisation, they come to work for Shelter because they want to be involved in campaigning, those are the very people we want to recruit, and they come into the office and we say 'you have to do this amount of case work per week and if you do any campaigning on top of that all to the good' ... it depends on the goodwill of the team...

I requested a job application form for a Housing Aid field worker, a grade 4 post at £20,000 in Crawley with a closing date of 10th May 2002. The job description contained no reference to campaigning, although it did stress a 'commitment to Shelter's vision and values' and a 'demonstrable understanding of the causes and effects of homelessness.' I do not therefore know whether such a post should contain a reference to campaigning or whether this had changed since my interview.

Tamsin pointed out that there were extensive management targets around case work but none on campaigning. Previously, Gary recalls, undertaking local campaign work had been a part of the work. Now he had become a contract manager concerned with targets and quality issues. Although there was a regional forum which could look at campaigning he now felt he could not spare the time to attend. Indeed an internal consultant's report had, according to Gary, made this an explicit change some years earlier: only do campaigning if all the case work is done. He seemed to now have reluctantly accepted this position:

My job has totally changed over the last two years. I'm now a contract manager. Before you had much more freedom to pursue initiatives, to help set up projects, to do research initiatives...people here said there was no problem of homelessness in [our town]. We showed there was.... You can't do much campaigning now. I think some other colleagues don't notice the change, they've maybe not been in post so long to see the changes. We have a regional policy forum that seeks to develop

campaigning - I don't go to it...there just isn't the time for me to do that...The Oldbourne Report said 'only do campaigning if the bread and butter work is done, if the case work is done.' I didn't agree with that then, but I've changed my mind.

Does the contracting work with the government on one side of the organisation hamper the campaigning work on the other side? Elliot felt it did not because the Legal Services Commission were simply interested in fulfilment of the contract:

...They are not interested in the campaigning and policy side....they do know the kind of organisation Shelter is. So they accept that somewhere Shelter will use the information they have... in an advocacy or campaigning role.

What seemed more problematic would be where there was an issue, let us say on benefit allowances for single young people. Here, for example, the Housing Services Department might think that this was an issue to campaign on but the policy section might be working with government on another priority issue, such as building affordable homes.

It seems that campaigning is indeed undertaken, but it is a small part of a large organisation. Arguably, campaigning could be seen as part of what everyone does; all the work could be 'fed into campaigns' as some people said. Nevertheless, the service side of the organisation appears to be useful to the campaigns side but not essential - there seems no reason for the service side to be of such size (roughly two thirds of the organisation) if it is simply to feed into campaigns. A fairer assessment, might be that Shelter seeks to do campaigning and service, and that it makes sense to link the two in some way, but that campaigning is not a current priority for the services department in the regional centres. It is more realistic to say that at the time of the research most of the campaigning role was undertaken centrally, within the policy or external affairs unit which occupies about 10% of the organisation's capacity (campaigning and education was credited in the annual report as 9.5% of total spend in 2000).

In summary, this picture implies that within Housing Services there was a severe challenge to two fundamental social progress values, firstly in campaigning and secondly in the services delivered. By contrast, process and instrumental values such as efficiency and professionalisation were favoured. The advent of increased contract funding was directly implicated as a major factor in this shift.

4.2.7 Types of Values at Shelter

Clearly there is a range of values operating in the organisation. There are values around equality of opportunity for users which seem to me to be both **social progress**

values and process values, around the way services should be delivered fairly. There are also **instrumental values** concerning good governance and, increasingly, the provision of a professional and effective service for homeless people. **Innovation** in creating services is another instrumental value. During my research at least one tacit value was uncovered, both common in charitable organisations: **process values** of the expectation of consultation within the organisation on changes. There was also evidence of 'organisational gentrification' - many staff are able to work flexibly, to undertake training, and increasingly to gain benefits such as child care days. To some extent the idea of a pleasant and convivial workplace is seen as a compensation for lower salaries.

The **campaigning values** are concerned with how society should arrange its institutions for reasons of fairness and equality. Due to the location of my research within the Housing Services part of the organisation, campaigning values were more difficult to examine directly. However this oblique view did provide some insights on the campaigning role in Shelter.

To return directly to Shelter's values, we can discern two specific social progress values which will be examined in more detail. Firstly, there is a **campaigning value around seeking long term change for the homeless** - this is embodied in aims, vision and values statements. It is also a theme which most staff articulate about Shelter in explaining why they want to work for the organisation. Secondly, there is a clear value around **working today to provide immediate improvements or services to support homeless people**. This can be identified in Shelter's founding advertisement and is a constant theme in written and spoken statements by the organisation today.

Factors Affecting Values

4.2.8 People Processes and Value Carriers

Are there value carriers in the organisation supporting and arguing for the organisation's values? My conclusion is that they do exist but their voice appears muffled. Motivated people join the organisation specifically because of their commitment to combat homelessness; they support the campaigning stance and the rights of homeless people. There is, however, a growing professionalism required in both service delivery and management practice within the organisation, perhaps as a result of the expansion in Housing Services. This, alongside the powerful requirements of the contracting regime, seem to constrain the actors' ability to stay with the values in service delivery.

Firstly let me illustrate that there are people highly committed to the organisational values by drawing on extracts from just three managers. Shirley was keen to hold people to the organisation's values:

I feel these [Value statements] are valid - and I think we shouldn't lose sight of these. I think we have got to draw people back... back to the underlying principles...the underlying issues still are about housing and the difficulties people have...

Gary saw it important in services delivery to maintain the connection to the values that all homeless people should have access to advice:

You have to step back, though, and say to people 'is it right?' It's also about are people getting access to justice, are they getting a legal service? That's what it's about.

Tessa felt some anxiety about the changes to the espoused values and asserted that Shelter had always taken a broad stance on homelessness:

It used to be that Shelter believed that homelessness was due to a failed housing system. There were problems with our old view on homelessness, of course,.. but our definition of housing need has always been broader than the legislation.

What seemed more problematic to Tessa was some managers' perceived inability to access the decision making, seeing blockages in the organisation:

...the regional management team...it seems we discuss the same thing each month ...I have a lot of confidence in our regional manager...but she is getting blocked - I don't know where it is...

Gary went further and felt some people were less committed and suggested that the culture was beginning to resemble that of a local authority:

I used to work in a local authority, there is not a lot of difference nowadays between that and [Shelter]. Thinking of your own values...Some people want to assist the homeless, others, like in a local authority, just see it as a job and want the money.

On the whole, nonetheless, most people espoused values in line with Shelter's position, and this may be attributable in part to recruitment processes.

Tamsin felt that staff were recruited into Shelter on the basis that it was a high profile campaigning organisation which they supported. Nevertheless, she felt that there was little chance in the regions to undertake any campaigning now within the contracting

regime. This may mean that a campaigning image serves well in recruiting committed staff who support the organisational values. However, it may mean disappointment at a later stage when they appear to not be engaging directly in that work.

Improving the management processes in the organisation, cited in the new mission statement, perhaps constituted organisational recognition of a shift to the more managerial and professional approach which seemed to have been required by the expansion in Housing Services. This had not been unwelcome among all the staff. Tamsin, while critical of the load of the new contracting arrangements, thought that the opportunity for improving management processes was welcome. Gary agreed, although reluctantly at times. Greater managerial expertise was welcomed, even if the style imposed by the funding body was not.

Had Shelter been undergoing a process of professionalisation? Staff who have been with the organisation longer than 10 years pointed to a more disorganised past, but one in which the campaigning was more hectoring. However the 'old days' were not always lauded as better. The sense that I gained was of staff accepting a need to cross a pain threshold into a larger more professionalised organisation, in order to undertake better quality of work. An indication of this approach can be seen in the appointment of a communication officer, perhaps representing a professionalised approach to the problem.

There were also indications of an organisation with 'similar kinds of people', according to Tanya, mainly middle class. Flexible working, training, and study leave were cited by several staff as attractive features of the organisation. This is not to suggest that staff are not working hard and long hours with great commitment and agreement with the cause. Nevertheless there was, in some discussions, the sense of an organisation 'gentrified.' Has this process, if it has happened, led to the loss of a cutting edge in the campaigning? One long term staff member in the organisation, who subsequently declined to be named, felt strongly that the organisation assumed change would now come through polite conversation with policy makers, and had become too cosy with government. It appears that the two processes - of professionalism and gentrification on the one hand, and a move away from a confrontational campaigning on the other, have arisen together, although it might be simplistic to suggest that one has directly caused the other.

In contrast, Imogen, as a more senior manager, denied that Shelter was in any way a 'cosy' place to be. Imogen pointed out that many of the younger staff could be quite virulent in debate and argument and this kept more established staff on their toes:

We are a very young work force - the average age is still about 29. It means we get very passionate people...and that keeps you on your toes in an organisation like this. You have people shouting at you saying 'I don't agree with what you are

doing.'

This contesting was also seen to happen in and through the trade union branch. Nevertheless this could be seen as a 'headquarters view' where there may be more organisational 'slack' away from the intense pressure of contract culture in small teams.

A combination of the following appeared to make it difficult for the 'voice' (Hirschman 1992) of value carriers to be heard: rapid organisational growth, contracting processes allowing little organisational slack, comparative paucity of interlinking structures, and difficulties of informal contacts combined with geographical isolation.

4.2.9 External Advocates

The issue of external advocates was not fully explored. as most of the managers interviewed in the organisation were perhaps not senior enough to be aware of the guardian figures of Shelter's extended influence. However one prominent government appointee who had previously worked for Shelter was cited, albeit with reservations. There was evidence of Shelter's close relations with government and civil service since the 1997 general election - a fact alluded to positively by both Eliot and Tamsin, but negatively by my external commentator. The connections may, however, be overtly political and not so much the 'friends of the organisation' uncovered elsewhere. An examination of some of the figures with ceremonial roles, for example the late Cardinal Basil Hume as former president, is suggestive of influential figures close to the organisation.

4.2.10 Informal Processes

Gary identified several factors around the reduction in organisational spaces for informal processes. He pointed to the demise firstly of organisational conferences, and secondly of the casual contacts that might be sustained with other staff by occasional visits to head office on training courses; these had reduced because a specific training centre had developed away from the main office. Thirdly, Gary identified that organisational size made contacts and relationships more difficult:

We used to have organisational conferences - they were a good source for organisational values - we don't do that now, we are more dispersed, there are people I used to see in head office, but I don't go there for years now, we are larger with hundreds of people. Those get together used to reaffirm what we were doing, helped you feel you were working on the same thing. Now the training centre [in London] is at a different venue from HQ so I don't see people at HQ so often.

There had been attempts to develop structures which may have had the incidental

effect of allowing more informal contacts. Two were cited, firstly regional forums of managers, and secondly some cross-cutting working groups. These are returned to in the section on organisational structure. Senior staff based at headquarters attributed the demise of the conference to cost considerations due to organisational growth, partly at least because of contract income in Housing Services.

Imogen was open about how some of the geographic spread of Shelter made communication difficult and she placed hope in a new intranet and a regular bulletin on Shelter's work:

That's one of the key aims of the Intranet - to improve that sense [of contributing]...and be able to put their views forward. It is much easier at Old Street [Head Quarters] because you get to hear what's going on. If you are out in the Housing Advice Centres with three people you are very isolated.

However, Tamsin pointed out that cross networking which did occur was frowned upon:

...it leaves you confused as a worker in an organisation - you know the hierarchy doesn't work so you have to go to personalities but you know that isn't quite right either.

She articulated 'a power struggle', which others had also alluded to, between headquarters and the regions; she found this problematic because neither the hierarchy nor the regions were strong enough to be effective on their own. My sense was that informal processes were weak and had not caught up with the expansion caused by Housing Advice Centres. Such processes must to some degree be parasitic on organisational mechanisms, and this could mean blockages in debate and decision making on values issues.

4.2.11 Organisational Structure

How do organisational structures affect Shelter in reproducing organisational values? Imogen was aware of grappling with ways to keep people involved despite organisational growth:

...the structure of Shelter - it isn't perfect...but I do think people feel they can feed back on the campaigns we are involved in and the stance we take... there's a lot more to do...They can't be part of all the decision making - we are too big - but there is that needing to feel that they do belong to an organisation.

A regional manager, Tessa, felt there was scope for 'healthy debate', particularly on

street homelessness and on changes to housing benefit where discussion from local teams had been fed upwards. Elliot pointed to the five cross divisional groups. One was looking at new ways of developing services and all of them worked to include users. Elliot also felt the regional forums would encourage local campaigning:

[In] Housing Services we would ...bring in people from the Housing Advice Centres's, we are keen to not make them Old Street [HQ] focussed. [there is]...a Policy Panel which is centrally based but has people from all over England attending. We also have local Housing Service Policy Campaign (HSPC) groups in each region ... which talk about a lot more local work around campaign issues...

Some managers, like Gary, however, felt it hard to attend regional meetings because of the pressure and priority of contract management.

4.2.12 Reflections on Shelter from other Sources

I want to digress here to examine a newspaper article which appeared towards the end of the research phase. This confirmed some of the themes discussed here: the sharp increase in income, and expansion of services, and the drafting work on the (forthcoming) Homelessness Act. During the seven years of Chris Holmes directorship:

Shelter's income had tripled to £30m and its staff increased to 500. A 24 hour homelessness helpline had begun; there had been a significant expansion of the services of the charity's 30 regional advice centres: and its influence on the governments housing policy, including the new Homelessness Act, had been widely recognised

(Dean 2001:10)

However in April 2002 an internal consultancy report had, according to Dean, suggested that " 'virtually all of respondents felt Shelter's campaigning work was very dependent on Chris Holmes and his high-level relationships.'" I wish to be wary of denigrating the significant achievements of the organisation or its expanded services and organisational growth. My interest is to see what we can learn about organisational values.

Dean's piece contains several points of interest. Firstly, it reiterated the rapid expansion of the organisation which may have had unforeseen impacts on organisational values in Housing Services.

Secondly, it confirms points raised by staff whom I interviewed, that a campaigning emphasis was placed on matters that would have strategic impact, such as the proposed Homelessness Act which necessarily involved much close liaison with national government.

These could well yield credible long term gains for the homeless. The balance between co-option or isolation remains a legitimate area for reflection. My informed outsider, however, was critical, believing that the organisation was not challenging enough. Clearly a whole range of widely different operational approaches could be consistent with Shelter's values and this campaigning style, while not to everyone's taste, is certainly a legitimate candidate. What is noteworthy is the closeness to statutory bodies necessitated by these processes over a period of several years. Examination of the effect that this had on both Shelter, and the government department, would provide an interesting case study in its own right.

This leads naturally on to the third point of interest. The implication in the article is of campaigning work being highly dependent on the senior figure, through personal contacts at a high level. I had received feedback from one source close to the organisation, who talked to me only on condition of non-attribution, suggesting that campaigning in the organisation had moved largely to polite conversations between like-minded people in social functions, and was far removed from the interests of the homeless. Another source outside the organisation felt that Shelter only worked with the 'better-off' homeless people, ignoring the most destitute. Whether or not these impressions are legitimate, they are clearly *felt* and there is some echoing of those points in the article by Dean. This raises several questions for this study. Firstly, would a strong connection to a social movement, or a strong membership base have challenged this approach? While the issue can be construed as one of means, to the critics it appears to represent something lost which goes beyond mere process values about ways of engagement ('we don't like to do it that way'). These are dilemmas that any serious campaigning organisation may face.

4.2.13 Insulation of Organisational Core

Was the campaigning part of Shelter centrally, either consciously or not, separated from the rest of the organisation? Such a separation could serve to insulate the non-contracting part of the organisation to maintain ideological purity, and centralise the campaigning to focus on national government.

Mike: ...suppose the Tories came in and you needed to be much sharper...would Shelter carry on OK if, say, radical move, you cut out all the Housing Advice? Drop all the contracts and just do the campaigning, maybe a much smaller organisation? Would the organisation still work stripped down in that way?

Elliot: It would work but in a different way. It wouldn't have the same effect - we say the advice work we do feeds into the campaigns and policy work. If we got rid of all the Housing Advice that claim wouldn't stand up.

Eliot was not alone in being puzzled by my thought experiment that Housing Services could be much smaller with less burdensome contracting processes, and that a campaigning centre might be protectively insulated away from the possibly malign affects of contracts. I have no evidence to suggest that this was a deliberative strategy (any more than a similar process detected at Ormiston). The article by Dean (2002) did suggest that staff within the campaigning hub felt campaigning was highly centralised.

4.2.14 Shelter as a 'Traditional Organisation'?

Had Shelter has begun to demonstrate the attributes of a 'traditional' organisation, as Milofsky (1997) described it? Interestingly, in commenting on my initial material sent to all interviewees, Imogen reflected unprompted and openly on this question.

Imogen: What is interesting is that Shelter has grown and before we had none of these structures and processes, none of these formal communication channels. It all just happened somehow in an amorphous way! I was interested in something in your material - was it Milofsky? - the point about 'traditional organisations that ossify' and I was wondering whether we are heading that way. I hope we are not.

Mike: What makes you fear that? What do you think the threats are in that direction?

Imogen:: I think the threats are having what funding we do get - the Legal Aid Board are putting huge benchmarks and targets that people have to meet and fill out large amount of forms....I think the beauty of voluntary organisations is that people have an awful lot of autonomy...there are some things we have to put in place to make it professional but not at the expense of losing the value base.

Absences can sometimes be instructive and two at least need recording here in terms of structure. Firstly, Shelter does not have a membership structure which might form a buttress against values loss in some situations. Secondly, an assertive board may also perform such a role. The board was part of this study, so no evidence can be offered either way.

4.2.15 Income Streams

Contracting issues became a dominant part of my research at Shelter and this is returned to in the values example shortly. Here attention is drawn to three points. Firstly, Shelter is operating in quasi-markets but also has significant voluntary income. Secondly, some of the market 'pull' could yet be toward straightforward commercial advice competing with solicitors. Thirdly, to what extent has Shelter been passive or active in

contract negotiation?

4.2.16 Shelter and Quasi-markets

Shelter is predominately operating in the quasi-markets of the public sector, although it does have a very high voluntary income of 80%. Contributing to this voluntary income is 20% from shops and a further 1% from merchandising. However, significant though these amounts are, these are not part of its core operation: Shelter does not exist to run shops or merchandising. The core work it undertakes: advice, new services, campaigning, are not revenue raisers in their own right and may, as we have seen with advice work, involve significant injections of public money. We might expect Shelter to have greater freedom with the small percentage of government funding it receives. However state funding, concentrated in certain areas of housing advice, makes up a very high percentage of these projects' income.

4.2.17 How does Shelter differ from Commercial Providers of Advice?

Several respondents were asked to what extent some of the advice work could be a private market operation. Some of this work comes close to that done by legal professionals, and indeed Shelter does employ its own team of solicitors in London. I asked how Shelter was better than a commercial provider of advice. This is pertinent as there are indications that charging for advice may arise for advice agencies. Elliot suggested that voluntary advice agencies were more expensive but delivered a better quality product to users. Shelter, for example, would move across boundaries between a client's problems, rather than stick to a specific presenting problem. Elliot felt that housing advice fed campaign work so that it could lead to a political change which would benefit more people. However the operation of contracts with isomorphic effects suggested to me that distinctive differences might narrow.

There were acknowledgments from senior regional and national staff, such as Imogen, that Shelter could be firmer in its negotiation of contracts. Elliot pointed out how the organisation had been involved with LCS to devise the processes and had influenced the overall framework. There were also clearly small modifications in what could be offered to advice seekers. As a result of discussions, outreach services were now possible.

4.2.18 Social Movements

Strong links between Shelter and social movements on poverty and homelessness were not uncovered. What did seem apparent was the role such movements might play in

attracting individual staff into the organisation. There appeared to be sufficient numbers of new recruits who knew of Shelter's reputation and joined 'on message.' In this sense Shelter drew on a social movement.

My understanding was that Shelter was more professionalised than embedded strongly in a social movement around homelessness. This seems to me evidenced in at least two ways. Firstly, it can be seen in the way that, quite properly, to understand the needs of homeless people, it must conduct focus groups and find willing people prepared to participate from the services it has provided. These groups are not like representative bodies which seek to forward the views of a certain group of homeless people in the manner of a lobby. Rather, I would characterise these activities as evidence of a professional campaign organisation, seeking to articulate the views of a disadvantaged group. That is perhaps akin to the distinction made in the disability world between organisations *for* and *of* the disabled. In that sense Shelter is an organisation for the homeless. The second strand of evidence I would put forward here would be in constitutional terms. Shelter is not a membership organisation in the sense of having a body of supporters who may influence policy.

A Values Example at Shelter

4.2.19 Contract culture

The example of contract culture's effects on the values in Housing Services Advice have already been discussed. Here some of the ramifications for Shelter's values are drawn out in more detail. Firstly the process of values drift may be incremental and therefore less recognised. Secondly the contracting process may represent not just a threat to external social progress values but an intrusion into internal management processes.

There was more of an ongoing slippage than a decisive shift in values detected, a phenomenon remarked upon by Boden (1994:21) when she criticised the method of critical incidents which implied defining moments. The process seemed more like a shifting of values with relatively little conscious decision. Tamsin describes here some of these gradual shifts:

...it is horribly complicated the Legal Service Commission...and came in very gradually...we got a little more and a little more over the years. I think people higher up didn't know as much as we knew...there was never a day when the LCS said we're going to offer you 40% of your income and change the way you are - it has just happened very very gradually.

Some of the ways that internal management structures and processes have been affected by these contracts are now considered. Tamsin talked about the LSC, with efficiency and professionalism welcomed while the extent of these externally driven processes seems overwhelming:

...they have quite onerous and strict management structures which to some extent is a good thing...we introduced some about five or six years ago and it was a great structure to put into a team...management systems and monitoring and checking, but every year it gets more onerous and more bureaucratic. So it is getting to the point now where the amount of time you are spending on administration...it is getting disproportionate to the benefits.

The manual is a highly detailed 170 page A4 text which forms part of the contract with the LSC. This is a tool for implementing structures across all organisations in receipt of contracts. From a values point of view it is highly prescriptive of organisational processes. To what extent can management processes be separated from the wider social progress values? Tamsin spoke of the way these intrude into how cases must be managed:

...That [A4 book] is the basic contract book that you have to abide with...It's a nightmare because it basically applies to solicitors and there are all sorts of management systems and systems for supervisors.

I was interested to know more about how it worked. Tamsin explained the detail which is prescribed and pointed out how little independence organisations had in this process. She suggested this would increase as this funding became more pervasive:

...It goes into great detail of how staff are supervised. What to do when you dealing with a case, what to do when you open a file...identifying key dates...So I am not saying it is a complete nightmare, a lot of it was very positive, but as they become increasingly the main funders of our service we have such little power to dictate how we do things. ..now we are getting to the point where we have to do it, whether it is good or not, because there is too much money wrapped up in it!

I reflected that the process sounded like an addictive process, whereby the addict is drawn further and further in, always believing they are in control. Tamsin found this apposite. However, counter posing the deterministic picture sketched here, she felt that the process could be controllable if there was sufficient organisational watch kept on the balance of LSC funding to other income. The question. Tamsin felt was the degree of independence arising from the amount of money, the balance of funding in given advice centres:

We are in a trickle trickle way because if they keep offering us more money, then we could well lose the autonomy to do the work we have always done.

This level of control, of both the organisation's external delivery and internal management structure, has arrived while the amount of contracted funding remains low compared to the overall budget. A senior manager was highly aware of these dilemmas. The contracting income, at £4 - £5m, had a big effect on the Centres Imogen believed:

I think that is an enormous threat to people's freedom and how important that is - if they value the organisation as independent, if the independence in their job starts to be whittled away, I think that affects people...I wonder if it fundamentally shifts how the organisation operates.

To what degree could the organisation become a contracted out government department? Alternatively could the organisation begin to resemble a commercial organisation, delivering a uniform service isomorphically with other providers?. I had posed the question directly to Tamsin who saw both threats as real issues:

...it does feel a danger, yes. I don't think it is insurmountable I just think it is about looking ahead, because this has been around for 5 years...We knew these issues [at the start] everyone was talking about them, everybody knows them, but someone at the top needs to say, 'right, we're going to go ahead with this but we are going to decide a limit to this...so we know at what point are we going to say 'no.'

Here Tamsin identified several ways out of this danger: a firm commitment to restricting the degree of funding from such sources; defining an acceptable funding mix at any given project base; an awareness and decision at senior level on the issue; a formal written policy on the issue; and implicitly, an ability to put the discussion and awareness at local level into the central decision making apparatus.

4.2.20 Preliminary Assessment of Values Reproduction at Shelter

There are a number of contrasting issues illustrated here which demonstrate some important issues about the reproduction of organisational values. There was no shortage of people committed to Shelter's values; in that sense there were **value carriers** in each of the locations where the research was conducted. **People were recruited** into the organisation partly on the basis of campaigning and, on the whole, motivation towards Shelter's values was high despite signs of a move towards a **managerial and professional** style of

working. **External advocates** were probably available to the organisation but were not directly cited in this research, perhaps due to the location of the research in Housing Services. There were some **informal processes** operating, but in general informal discussions and opportunities to meet, where values might be an issue, were reported to be low. In general the degree of **cross organisation structures** was low but several forums were being energised in regions and nationally. Assertive younger staff who would **challenge and contest** were cited at headquarters; nevertheless it was not certain that there was easy access into decision making or discussion forums. In the regions there was, at times, an overwhelming sense of constraint felt by the effects of **contracting culture** on the delivery of homelessness advice; this threatened key organisational values and impinged on internal management styles. The latter impact was not always unwelcome. While Shelter has connections to **social movements** around poverty and homelessness, these did not seem to impinge readily although they served recruitment well. The extent of **voluntary income** at 80% of the organisation contradicts the notion that this factor alone may guarantee organisational autonomy. The **insulation** of the organisational core of campaigning may be an unintentional strategy to try to preserve values. A speculation was that there would be few restraining effects on the drift of organisational values without an **assertive board** (not studied here) or a **membership structure** (not present at Shelter) in a climate where staff are welcoming a more professionalised management and an active social movement is not able directly to affect the organisation.

4.3 St Mungo's

The Cliche: Providing hostels for drunk Scots men

Their Banner: The best chance for London's homeless men and women

4.3 St Mungo's Overview

4.3.1 Introduction

'Providing hostels for drunk Scots men' is the glib cliché for how St Mungo's is seen by someone, according to the chief executive, Daniel. There is a degree of truth in the summation but the phrase conceals the innovation in its work with a client group unloved by the general public. St Mungo's commitment is to work with the many 'chaotic' street homeless in a compassionate but well informed way. It claims an unromantic outlook in its work with rough sleepers. One staff member, when asked by a prospective trustee how the hostels measured success, responded: 'we don't have success we have varying degrees of failure.' This was a blunt appraisal of the crisis facing St Mungo's clients. The images conjured by St Mungo's are of a tough and gritty organisation, scruffy, working class, or as one informant put it 'unafraid of the spit and piss' of bodily fluids. The annual report offers a more developed account of St Mungo's work:

We live in a time of freedom and opportunity for many, but of disillusionment and estrangement for some. Among these are the people who sleep rough on our streets. Relationship break-ups, mental illness, heavy drinking, drug-taking, unemployment and poor housing are some of the reasons that people become homeless.

(St Mungo's London: an illustrated guide annual report 2000)

4.3.2 The Story of St Mungo's

Rough sleepers and homeless people are not a new phenomenon. St Mungo's claim in 1965 over 1,000 people were found sleeping rough around the country with 28,000 single people in hostels. By the early 1990s there were over 2,700 rough sleepers, nearly half of them in London (Annual Report:1999). St Mungo's is predominately working with the most intractable of the homeless.

Despite the Christian sounding name, St Mungo's is a secular organisation. Mungo was the nickname of Bishop Kentigern a 6th century bishop of Glasgow and patron saint of wandering Celts. The organisation was set up by a Glaswegian who adopted the name St Mungo's. The St Mungo's Community was established as a trust to house and support men and women rough sleepers in London in 1969. Since then it claims a number of innovations. As early as 1972 St Mungo's conducted the first street counts of homeless

people and during the mid-70s leased property as multi-purpose hostels and work training centres. Outreach services were started in the 1990s and one of the first street drinkers hostels in the capital opened shortly after.

4.3.3 St Mungo's Today

St Mungo's is described as a 'community housing association' with a 14-person management committee whose discernible professional roles encompass business, local or national government, sports, charitable sector and foundations.

Today St Mungo's describes itself as 'London's largest homelessness agency' running 11 hostels, a cold weather shelter, eight registered care homes and 40 supported houses. They offer 1,276 beds for people who have slept rough. The accommodation may contain additional services to assist with drugs, alcohol, or substance abuse. Examples of the services that may be provided include: a medical centre, a visiting acupuncturist, training and job placement support, and resettlement support for those moving to independent housing. Conventional housing can be unfamiliar and threatening for those familiar with life on the street. Shelter is therefore provided at a variety of levels as appropriate to the condition of the rough sleeper in order to build trust and rapport. One 'entry level' hostel was described to me as 'little more than a street with a tin roof over it' and accommodation proceeds through to dormitory and single room accommodation. The Contact and Assessment Teams (Cats) are staff who go out onto the streets and find homeless people, assess their condition and if appropriate encourage them into accommodation. These Cats operate in eleven London boroughs five nights a week.

In 2000, in contradiction of the cliché about St Mungo's client group, only 11% of residents and clients had Scotland as their birthplace, with 11% from Ireland, 12% from London, but 40% from other parts of England. The ethnic origin of people admitted to accommodation was 80% white, 11% African, 5% Caribbean and 2% Asian. The majority of people helped (54%) were in their middle years, between 30 and 49 years old and 86% were male.

The organisation employed 500 full time staff and had a turnover of £18.5m in 2000. A total of £1.3m was raised by the organisation as voluntary income but the majority of revenue and assets come from the state, either directly or indirectly. This is through contracts with government departments, income from state benefits via residents for hostel places. St Mungo's attributes 90% of its income as from government sources (Annual Report 1999:17).

4.3.4 The Research

I was interested in St Mungo's for several reasons. The research undertaken at Shelter appeared to show an organisation confronted by values challenges in the face of a contracting culture. St Mungo's was also operating in the homelessness field and engaged in contracting for the government's Rough Sleeper's Initiative (RSI). Rough sleepers have appeared as front page news under Conservative and Labour governments. The RSI programme, introduced by the Conservatives, was newsworthy as a scheme to ameliorate the issue, while under Labour outspoken comments by the 'homelessness Tsar' had been controversial. How St Mungo's was maintaining its values in an arena that was a political and media issue was a pertinent question. St Mungo's was cited as a 'good quality' organisation by a colleague at about the same time that I was reading a report in the Guardian Society page describing Mungo's innovative work with elderly rough sleepers. My supervisor, Roger Spear, mentioned a contact who had recently been impressed in her work with St Mungo's. With the help of this contact I made preliminary contact with Neville.

An additional area of interest, which was subsequently found to be incorrect, was that St Mungo's described itself as a Friendly Society. This was a misunderstanding between the organisation and the regulatory body.

Although I had been involved in a professional capacity with the London Homelessness Forum between 1991 and 1996 but had not met staff from St Mungo's. It is 'quiet' in the sense that their staff do not appear routinely at homelessness conferences and its 'brand recognition' to the public is low. As the research progressed I began to see St Mungo's as well focussed on a severely disadvantaged group and it stands slightly apart from many better known homelessness organisations.

My own first impressions of St Mungo's from my research diary are perhaps worth recording as they may give a flavour of the organisation:

...and offered some tea while I waited on a plastic chair in a project's office. Staff and residents continued in their day to day way...While I was there one young man came in severely distressed, crying, dripping saliva pleading for his medication and whining, bent over, looking very dishevelled...I was a bit nervous...I met Neville downstairs in the canteen over a formica table with ketchup bottles and salt cellars...Very down to earth kind of organisation.

(Research diary extract June 2001)

My key contact for the research was Neville who had worked at St Mungo's for 20 years. He had started as a hostel worker and was now a senior manager with organisational development responsibilities. We met on three occasions: for an initial briefing at the start

of the research, for a final meeting where I could check findings, and finally at the inter organisational seminar in November 2001. Guided by my needs Neville suggested a range of people to interview and kept in touch with me during the research. I visited a further eight people: **Daniel**, the chief executive, **Edward** the senior financial director and **Dev** with personnel responsibilities, who constituted the senior management team; **Bev** a middle manager responsible for project areas including outreach, **Matt** who managed a Cat outreach team, **Kay** and **Oliver** who managed hostels and **Denise**, a union representative. This encompassed a range of levels in the organisation and lengths of service (Dev, Oliver and Denise had been in post for two years or less); this strategy was intended to locate me in a good position to investigate the impact of contracts on values and a particular key site for values (the Cat teams). To avoid any confusion with the abbreviated name of another case study organisation examined in this thesis (CAT) I have referred to these teams in Mungo's as 'Cat.'

St Mungo's and Organisational Values

4.3.5 Espoused Values at St Mungo's

St Mungo's vision is stated simply: 'All homeless people should have a decent place to live with dignity and the chance to reach their full potential' while the mission states the organisation exists 'to help single homeless people who have been or are in danger of sleeping rough and who have needs in one or more of the following areas: health, housing, work, relationships, income and life skills.' In a paper to the management committee in March 2001 to accompany the business plan, the chief executive, pointed out that the official statement had 'never adequately described the breadth and complexity of our work' and hence Mungo's aim was: 'to be the best chance for London's homeless men and women.'

The core written values in March 2001 can be summarised as follows (emphasis is mine):

1. St Mungo's has always recognised that homeless people '*...need **somewhere to live, something to do, and someone to love.***'
2. Staff will be able to '*.. relate to them with **personal warmth.***'
3. St Mungo's has '*always worked with **people right on the margins**, and in future we shall place greater emphasis on connecting them to the services to which they are **entitled.***'
4. The pre-requisite of resettlement is settlement, '*or "**stabilisation**". One of our great but unsung successes is the ability to hang on to people who may not be*

compliant, and in so doing we help to prevent deterioration.' The aim is to promote this.

5. '...we shall continue to seek and promote **creative responses to needs**' and ..

6. 'we aspire to **set the standards for the sector.**'

These value statements emphasise in (1) some of the needs that homeless people have that St Mungo's wishes to respect, and in (3) the group of people that St Mungo's wishes to work with. They set out social progress values around working for these people's rights of entitlement to services. Under (2) some of the behavioural values expected of staff are cited and under (4) some of the instrumental values of working to achieve its aims. Finally there are instrumental values around aspirations to be innovative (5) and in the setting of high standards (6).

4.3.6 Key Stakeholders' Accounts of Values at St Mungo's

Daniel phrased the aspiration in terms of avoiding opportunistic funding, sticking to their principles and maintaining the work with this most disadvantaged of groups:

We have got some principles I think. We used to say we are interested in principles not money...it does come down to working with the most vulnerable and giving them a break...Someone's gotta do it. All this stuff about 'we're not going to have paedophiles and we're not going to have this or that.' I don't particularly like paedophiles but, hell, they have to live somewhere. These are social issues that do not get addressed. There is a risk that we become the dustbin of society.

That position was reinforced by Matt, manager of the Contact and Assessment Teams (Cat teams) when he emphasised that they take people other agencies say have 'too many support needs.' He pointed out that this is the nature of rough sleepers. He felt it was rare for St Mungo's to turn away people because they were too difficult. Matt underlined a commitment by emphasising that in some cases they actively excluded those in less desperate need who could access mainstream services.

The commitment is illustrated by Neville, a senior manager, when he talks of the founding years:

...we started out being...soup runs in the street for people who were completely destitute...We ran slums in unwanted buildings for short terms...then went out to the streets and brought people in. Word went round...and they would then show up...a 500 person hostel of single rooms. It was a wild, wild, wild place...all the variants of socially excluded people, deviants...'housing dossiers' would have been the very phrase...

Kay, a project manager, emphasised what she described as the outward values of St Mungo's in working with the most dispossessed and how this was connected to values of the staff:

Trying very hard to tolerate what is very challenging and disruptive behaviour - this is something that St Mungo's' definitely tries to do and is fairly good at - and not get over concerned with procedure because you can then exclude just about everyone...

Some of these internal staff process values were emphasised by Neville, using a rapport building respect, being patient in order to work with a group otherwise neglected:

...we were told to be non-judgmental - take people for what they are, build rapport and use that to help them cope with the difficulties that they face...I would say be supportive, tolerance, patient, be positive...and be prepared to go that extra mile for these people that other people in the community have abandoned...we put up with the unpleasantness and the awfulness, the viciousness because we know that's why we are there.

Bev, a middle manager, emphasised the organisation's orientation to a rights perspective - that everyone deserves the chance to be off the street and to have basic needs met. The way of doing this is very much taking them on their terms, meeting them on the street and trying to make a difference:

I think the bottom line is that nobody deserves to spend a night on the street...we should do everything we can to help everybody to not have to face that lifestyle. That starts with a very basic level - providing for their basic needs, their primary health care, food, clothing, shelter...But the bottom line, the bread and butter of what we do, is housing people off the street, meeting them there and trying to make a difference. That is the core. That's what the organisation stands for.

Kay also saw the work as about trying to bring the street homeless back into more ordinary social life but stressed the link to their own processes of working, to provide a secure but not over-regimented environment, to enable that integration to take place. She emphasised a rehabilitative ethos, a secure environment so people might become calmer. For most of the people St Mungo's is working with, the 'best chance' that Neville refers to is apposite. Matt reflected to me that clients' own aspirations need respecting. Sometimes living in a hostel or institution may be as far as they can progress. Daniel also considered it important to not romanticise the group and cited the need to combine commitment to the

user group with support to staff:

...we don't over-romanticise either homelessness or homeless people - we take them as we find them. We have got, I like to think, a lot of integrity, believing in what we do. We don't shout about it very much. I think that runs throughout. I think we are supportive to staff. The gist of what people have said who have left St Mungo's and come back...[is that].. we have a lot of emphasis on care and support.

Another kind of value expressed was a 'can do' culture. Matt, as an outreach worker, valued the way St Mungo's would act quickly to set new work up. He identified himself as a 'St Mungo's' person which meant not just an identification with the immediate piece of work but with the whole organisation:

..well I identify myself as a St Mungo's person - that is one of the management challenges - to get people to identify with their project, their team and the organisation. Quite often it is very project orientated...

For newer staff like Oliver the messages given at the interview stage made it clear what kind of organisation St Mungo's was and the values it held to:

...the questions at the interview show it...'how do you reduce the rate of evictions in this hostel?' This gives you the message we are into retaining people and reducing evictions...Pretty soon you begin to see how it works...a lot of it is fairly informal.

4.3.7 Types of Values at St Mungo's

In the last section we saw some of the way St Mungo's values were expressed by staff. There was a strong congruence between staff accounts of values and the espoused values examined in 2.1 namely:

Social progress values: (a) The focus of the work was strongly on this particular and difficult disadvantaged group; (b) an emphasis on trying to meet the needs of those homeless people; (c) working for their rights of entitlement to services.

In order to realise these values certain **behavioural values** were expected of staff (such as support) and **instrumental values** as to how best to work to achieve its aims with project clients (patience, tolerance, flexibility). These all have elements of **process values** within them in that the values are embedded in the way staff are interacting with users rather than a product or outcome. Finally there were also **instrumental values** around aspirations to be innovative (5) and in the setting of high standards (6).

Factors Affecting Values at St Mungo's

4.3.8 Value Carriers and People Processes

The Cat teams are often regarded as one of the centres of the organisation's values. Matt, from this Cat team felt they were sometimes caricatured in that way 'it sometimes sounds like we are the soul of the organisation' but several respondents made this point too, and he himself said 'I am St Mungo's through and through.' Interestingly when Matt was asked about this 'soul' of St Mungo's he didn't see it just as values held by individuals but as something embedded in the work that the Cat does in engaging homeless people:

I think more about how we go out there...The Cat team as a thing goes out on the streets and engages rough sleepers in their own environment and then persuades hopefully into engagement with something of benefit.

While St Mungo's could not be described as a 'lifestyle' organisation - one that is joined and taken on as a living, not just working commitment, there is nevertheless a sense of mission and identification amongst the staff. This may in part due to an internal camaraderie developed from working with an unpopular and challenging client group, and a necessary intensity of contact and support that may develop between staff. It may be, as some suggested, that the organisation strives to be caring and considerate towards staff. Another view was that expressed by Dev that 'people feel very confident they do their job well in tackling homelessness...They want to stick to the job they know well.' Bev pointed out something of that 'St Mungo's person' when she described not just the motivation but the mannerisms and dress code of the people who come to work at St Mungo's:

...I try to meet every new staff member of my group...they are always proud to work for the organisation...they mostly try to quickly adopt the mannerisms of the organisation - the way people dress, rolling their own cigarettes while leaning on the counter, I am always surprised by this...one of our committee members...said the difference between people who work for St Mungo's and the people who work in the statutory sector is that we wear more body piercing and tattoos than they do...the people we recruit have the values that ascribe to our aim...

A related point here which concerns identification with the organisation and its values is the nature of St Mungo's as, what can affectionately be termed, 'scruffy, down to earth, working class.' I reflected this back to Neville in our final interview. He could recognise this picture:

...there is a bit of a dungarees, sandals image...then with Matt and me, a very pronounced accent, that's true of a lot of people around...You stick at it - you do these hard crappy drudgy jobs and stick at it until you come to the end...there is working classness about all that, about willing to be in the shit.

The chief executive described something of the importance people attach to their work, a sense of 'being bitten' of gaining high motivation and believing their work will make a difference. I asked if this was like the work becoming a personal mission?

Daniel: Yes I think so and it is important. I think people's personal enthusiasm remains very alive. I think when people are saying... 'well in 3 months I am going to get this sorted out' - there is always this kind of way of 'I can see the point of what I am doing and it is going to make a difference.' I think too the belief...is widespread and tangible. There's nothing abstract to what people do.

This level of pride was evidenced elsewhere with one staff member, Kay, who had left for another similar organisation but returned because she felt she was 'a St Mungo's person at heart.' The chief executive was aware of this tendency amongst staff. He had been internally promoted to his post and was widely cited as a vital guardian of St Mungo's values.

The issue of staff longevity in the organisation is an important ingredient. It was accepted that there was a high turnover in the front-line staff, and recruitment in London at the time of the research was not easy, but elsewhere in the organisation there was a noticeable staff retention. Amongst senior staff and middle managers, about 30 people (70%) had been promoted 'through the ranks', according to Dev in personnel. He acknowledged that this had some dangers and might lead to some stagnation. It did have a good effect in integrating St Mungo's values at all levels of the organisation. The stability in some of the teams was also noticeable. According to Dev about a quarter of staff above project manager level come and 'make it their home' for more than five years, but many for considerably longer.

Challenging more senior staff was frequently cited. The chief executive in particular, was seen as open to challenge and discussion outside of hierarchical concerns. Kay for example felt the ethos was that managers would not stand behind roles:

I think there is quite a lot of emphasis on - this is a felt thing rather than a conscious thing - people as people rather than roles, posts and whatever. I have on occasions button-holed [the chief executive] when I have been hopping mad and he has taken me to a quiet room and let me sound off about something which I think is fantastic...there isn't this 'I am a manager I don't have to take this'...

Strong evidence of value carriers was found at different levels in the organisation - people who had a quite passionate belief in what the organisation stood for and how it enacted this, and who were prepared to argue for it. In some cases staff who had left returned. There was a strong identification with the organisation and ethos and there was a longevity of involvement of staff highly articulate about the organisation's values.

4.3.9 External Advocates

External advocates of the organisation were articulated less in the interviews with staff at St Mungo's than in some of the other organisations researched although this does not mean they do not exist. There are several reasons why such figures do not readily appear. Firstly I did not meet board members who may act as that bridge. Secondly there is, understandably, an intense focus on the client group and, as remarked earlier, St Mungo's does not 'shout about itself' and is not so well known outside its field. It is reasonable to suppose its *organisational* outreach is not as extensive as some organisations - it is focusing less on explicit changes in its external environment and more on direct work with a disadvantaged group. This may be unfair in that policy or marketing departments were not examined but interestingly such roles are not often referred to at St Mungo's. A third reason may be that there are fewer external advocates because the client group is highly unromantic and unpopular or that such advocates keep a lower public profile. Fourthly external advocates of St Mungo's are probably in professional circles - in social work or therapeutic practice, 'insiders' in professional practice. Finally while at lower levels there is a high throughput of people who get their first job at St Mungo's, there may be less of a St Mungo's diaspora, simply because many stay or return to the organisation.

4.3.10 Informal Processes

Informal processes were cited by the chief executive, Daniel, as some of the most important ways of staff meeting across the organisation:

I think a lot of working relationships that people have are quite important, the informal networks...

This seemed highly plausible in a team where from project manager level upwards staff had been in post some while, with high degrees of internal promotion and rotation around the organisation. Dev acknowledged that within the projects there was less opportunity for this to happen both informally and within the formal structures (see 3.2).

Of those more established staff I interviewed Neville and Daniel had worked together for more than 10 years in different organisational roles, as had a middle tier such as Matt and Bev. Both Neville and Matt could talk about 'going out on the streets' together recently.

It is worth pointing out here that while St Mungo's is a London-wide organisation, some of the non-official mechanisms are able to operate well within that geographic spread. The trade union was an example here. While not all managers were without reservations about the trade union, it had been originally established by a staff member who was now a senior manager. Other senior staff acknowledged that the trade union played an important role in the informal structure as one of the few mechanisms cutting across the entire organisation. There is a 70% membership of the union in St Mungo's, according to the union representative interviewed, which is considered high. Shift and night work meant the union had difficulties organising meetings which everyone could reach. Nevertheless there were monthly union shop meetings, quarterly general meetings attracting 20 to 30 members, pub socials as well as annual general meetings and Christmas parties. Denise pointed out the integrating nature of the union:

The union is the union regardless of where you work whereas there is a thing of "I work for Cedars or Argyle St rather than St Mungo's" - that is one of the things the union does something to tackle.

She had met so many more people across the organisation that she would not have met if it wasn't for the trade union activity.

Other informal processes included weekly 'picnics' where staff came together at Matt's project as social events:

We have a picnic on a Friday after 4 o'clock. It is something most people want to participate in - you don't have to have a drink - I am aware that it can be a bit exclusive - not everyone wants and we play football - there is a tournament - which we always win!

This also led me to another informal process which several (male) respondents cited: a knockout football team competition played between different projects, involving project staff and managers. Some staff believed the trade union was involved in organising this competition but I could gain no absolute confirmation on this nor whether this was only open to male staff. Whether St Mungo's values would be high on the list of after match debate may seem questionable, but the presence of such social activities across the organisation is illustrative of an organisation where social and work mix for at least some staff.

4.3.11 Organisational Structure

The formal organisational structures at St Mungo's are considered here. Specifically examined will be the induction processes, project and managerial away days, cross-project groups and forums, and the structure of the industrial and provident society.

4.3.12 Induction Processes and Away Days

Induction processes are considered very thorough. Dev described the mandatory five day induction programme for all staff. He felt this might not always be appropriate for everyone but the rationale was to enable new staff to understand the organisation and its values and to have the techniques for dealing with the client group: The five days of organisational induction is for all those joining the organisation, including receptionists and administrative staff. Edward, the finance director confirmed the ubiquity of the induction programme:

It doesn't matter which department you go into - within 6 weeks everyone who is new should go into the induction programme.

Oliver who had worked in a local authority background had found the induction when he started as manager of a centre surprising:

I got a very thorough induction. It was quite unusual....I spent two weeks just visiting other projects plus some training days as well...I didn't get to visit here [the project] for about two and a half weeks...I was beginning to get suspicious...what are they hiding from me!

Neville described how during the course staff would go through a process of understanding, for example, difficult behaviour typical within the client group such as managing aggression and violence. Bev, a middle manager responsible for the Cat teams, saw induction as honing the practice of staff who have already worked with street homeless:

...for the Cat team...We are bringing people in who know the client group...and most people will have some experience of outreach. We will have to induct them locally ...and induct them centrally into what does St Mungo's stand for, where does it come from...who are the key people in the organisation, what are our core values...

The induction appears to provide a common platform of understanding about the organisation and its values for all staff.

There are relatively few cross-project groupings and integration is, it is admitted, not as well developed formally as it could be. There are however a few such groups. Each project is expected to have an away day at least once a year for staff. There are regular manager's days where strategy is discussed and some cross-project groups where staff come together to discuss themes.

Kay, for example, described the way managers came together in her area of work once a month:

...that is something we all take for granted now...So once a month I meet all the other home managers in St Mungo's. There are eight of us and our group manager...these are business meetings but inevitably these are social meetings too. It helped get over the feeling of being cut off and in your own little world.

There are also annual staff conferences drawing up to 80 people. They typically include speakers, a Cat manager talking about priorities on the street, and issues such as community support, and brainstorming sessions on forward strategy.

4.3.13 Cross Project Groups and Forums

Dev described other structures including business planning meetings to involve staff across the organisation as well as issue or focus groups. This could mean a manager attending an away day for their own project, an away day of all managers, and also a day with managers and senior managers. In the previous year business planning meetings were introduced with the aim of improving communication 'top to bottom and bottom upwards'. Dev also described the existence of some cross cutting forums such as a Black issues staff support group, an Irish focus group, which discuss and share practice.

4.3.14 St Mungo's Role as an Industrial and Provident Society

Structurally St Mungo's is an Industrial and Provident Society (IPS), due to its position as a provider of accommodation and as a community housing association. The structure bestows many of the privileges of charities but there are some differences. IPSs are essentially mutual membership organisations. There is an association of about 40 people who are members of St Mungo's and this group elects the management committee. The chief executive admits that for this association there is a 'is circular self perpetuating and unaccountable way that people become members of the association.' But it does provide some specific benefits:

Daniel:...[take] people living next to one of our hostels, I got inundated once with requests to become members of St Mungo's! They wanted to get the hostel to move which is not on!.. we are not a community based organisation...we don't see it as beneficial to have members of the association elected....The one thing you can say is no one locality wants [our clients].

Rather like Coin Street, a later case study, the lack of an open process of selecting the management committee means it can protect the organisational values against entry by outsiders unhappy with the client group.

4.3.15 The Board

The board, or management committee, has a composition which enables it to draw on a mixture of professional and influential people. They include, for example, the chief executive of the Guinness Trust, a big voluntary sector housing provider, a psychiatrist, a representative from the Cabinet office. The chief executive sees the board as committed to the client and prepared to see the organisation take calculated risks. He saw there being a close agreement between values of board and staff on the work:

They want us to be an organisation that takes risks...We don't take blind and foolish risks but we need to [take risks] - because if we don't what's the point of St Mungo's?...The other thing that they see as a cardinal principle is that we work with people that other people won't work with...The basic values of the committee and the basic values of most of the front line workers are very close together...

4.3.16 Income Streams

St Mungo's operates in public sector markets, although the form of this deserves some attention. St Mungo's' contracts for state services: the Rough Sleepers Initiative (RSI) being the most obvious. It also derives a large part of its hostel income from resident's housing and other benefits. Rents are the main element at about 48% of turnover. Whether this is described as 'public money' or 'earned income' is an interesting question. St Mungo's certainly describe it as the former in official documentation. However many social economy organisations might describe that as earned income, even though it originally comes from the state: '...almost 90% of our income comes directly or indirectly from government sources...' although it could cite a steady increase in its own fundraising income (St Mungo's Yearbook: 1999:17). To what extent does this degree of dependence on state income cause St Mungo's difficulties in remaining true to its values?

Edward, in finance, felt St Mungo's future 'was in its own hands' but he did not

underestimate the difficulties the contracting regimes placed on the organisation:

Last year we had 34 different agreements with the RSU which brought in just over £3 million. Each of them I had to approve and each of my accountants had to be involved, each of them were agreements we had to tender for...and put budgets in.

In such competitive processes where, St Mungo's was bidding against other agencies, did they sometimes bid low to get the work? The implication might be, for example, that staff ratios might have to be reduced, compromising the attention residents might receive? Edward thought the multitude of funding sources mitigated against this:

some projects...could be funded entirely from the rent we collect, through to say an alcohol project which has 17 bed spaces that gets rent, supported housing management grant from the Housing Corporation, money from the London Boroughs Grant Unit, more top up funding from Camden - you are getting funding from various sources...We also have our own fundraising department...

Was there scope after a successful tender to renegotiate parts of that? This was felt to be hard although variations within budget heads were allowed.

Edward agreed that the search for funding could take St Mungo's away from its main goals. He argued that there may be a need to expand by developing other services to relieve core costs. From the chief executive the position was quite clear. The quasi-markets of state funding regimes were not markets as understood in the private sector. There was, he said, interference in the internal processes of the organisation:

I don't think they are proper contracts. I don't think the civil service has a clue about real private sector practices...what we find is that where we have a contract they still want to interfere in the process. On a contractual basis it should be outcome only and leave us alone...

Bev raised an additional concern about the contracting processes. She felt there was an absurdity of some of the contracts which involved sharing practice with other organisations who then became competitors in the next bidding round.

It is bizarre...the government say - here is the job we want doing - then they divide the job up so different agencies do it instead of one agency doing, say, Westminster...We then have to come together to say this is how we did this...what a bizarre situation: to have to compete and then share information...we will probably have to compete against each other next year.

Neville pointed out with these quasi-markets there are several agencies that might want to sell their expertise but only one buyer - the state. This can have disastrous consequences for those organisations that don't manage to 'sell' their service. One national organisation had to stop its work after failing to get funding for their street work. Neville felt that St Mungo's survived because they had a more thought out programme.

Neville:we know on some of the contracts we got...we were more expensive, we were also better able to say what we would do with the money. We believe that's why we got the money...

Neville felt that this had worked because of St Mungo's expertise in the area but that there are clear dangers. Individual organisations are likely, through this process, to be forced into an isomorphic approach which may threaten their own distinctive style and values.

4.3.17 Social Movements

Social movements are intriguing at St Mungo's. To some extent the organisation seeks to avoid overt association with 'causes'. Whereas some organisations wish they had a clear social movement associated with them, St Mungo's has actively dissociated itself. This is partly a response to the way that homelessness became, in the eyes of some managers at St Mungo's, a fashionable political issue in the 80s which they felt led to 'street homelessness' being appropriated but not with their own most desperate client group in mind. Neville said they had wished to disassociate themselves from a campaigning frenzy in the 1980s where people with little understanding of this client group were seeking improvements which were inappropriate. A senior colleague had:

...talked of hoisting the Jolly Roger above the building to repel the campaign groups who were clustering around homelessness at the time. Marches on Parliament and so on - they had very clear ideas about the standards that homeless people should be able to expect in terms of levels of rent and personal space

Within St Mungo's they felt their client group would not draw sufficient funds to run work in high standard buildings. The debates were seen as misguided, misunderstanding the way that their client group could contribute to the service.

Part of that ideological phalanx we were resisting was also saying - users should be on the board...to which our response was 'do you know what you are talking about?'...Putting them on the board would be no service to them or to the board. it

would freak them out. Until we can build up something that will work we are not going to divert ourselves...

Neville stressed, in a personal view, that an appropriation took place on the street with some rough sleepers being pushed out in favour of stronger vocal young people not, initially, in such need.

... in 1987 there was a lot of coverage when the temperature dropped...suddenly the police were inundated with people heading into the sleeping rough areas...hundreds, and saying they had been kicked out of home, lost a job...supplanting and sometimes abusing the other rough sleepers...a personal view but I was out on the streets a lot at that time...

Nevertheless it is possible to identify something of a network of people which in Diani's terms (1992) at least resembles something of such a movement. One indicator of this for me was an often intangible commitment that several staff referred to in different ways, and that is implicitly connected to a right's movement. For example the chief executive says with some feeling '...it does come down to working with the most vulnerable and giving them a break...Someone's gotta do it...they have to live somewhere.' or the finance director 'even those organisations which claim to deal with the homeless will reject the people that we bring into our hostels' or from Matt: '..not allowing to write anyone off...' In that sense St Mungo's is influenced by notions of rights of a marginal group and justice in terms of access to services, notions certainly part of the wider social discourse. The respect and commitment for a group much downgraded but without cynicism places the organisation in alignment, if not direct affiliation with human rights, justice and poverty movements. I put this point to Neville in our final summation interview.

Mike: So you wouldn't necessarily see yourself as part of the Human Rights lobby or the Poverty lobby?

Neville: We would probably march behind some of their banners but we wouldn't necessarily be there painting the banners - we are not in the inner circle on that...

Another indicator is a sub-group with allegiance to the client group. A government temporary job scheme 'Cold Weather' had acted to bring a group of passionate people into the field on a temporary basis, and many had stayed. To some extent staff would still acknowledge their origin in such a scheme as a talisman. As Matt put it:

you got a whole crop of new workers who came into the organisation and wanted to work with this very difficult group...if they didn't like it they could leave, and if

they did like it could say 'yeah that's for me'...quite a lot who had a bit of passion and drive....People say 'Oh did you do Cold Weather?' That's one of the defining things. Loads of our workers done that... So they have this very positive attitude and it is like a resource...

My suggestion here is that both of these phenomena, the implicit links to rights and justice movements and sub-groups engaged with the client groups, provide a values reservoir of ideas and people, from which St Mungo' may draw. It is also worth noting here that social movements which are apparently aligned can be unhelpful in some cases in providing a supportive base for an organisation's values.

A Values Example at St Mungo's

4.3.18 Cat Teams and Contracts

The question here is how St Mungo's has managed the impact of contract culture on its service to street homeless? Looking at the Cat teams in relation to the Government's Rough Sleeper's Initiative two difficulties imposed by the contracts are explored.

Firstly there were threats to service delivery values and secondly to the process values around internal decision making.

The targets and approach of the RSU were not so far removed from the approach of the Cat outreach teams, but there was an effect on St Mungo's hostels to which these people would be referred. Bev felt that it altered the Mungo's approach towards becoming 'harder' towards the clients.

We are going towards a contract culture... suddenly 18 months ago the RSU said we are going to give you all the money you need to do your outreach work...But...we are driven by these targets now...we have to refer so many people into hostels and reduce the number of people on the street and take a much harder line...be more assertive and less fluffy. In terms of outreach...that's OK but if that wasn't OK...we'd end up in a very difficult position...

The way St Mungo's might want to work with street homeless might require a more sensitive approach than a simple target focused approach of a government agency, as St Mungo's approach is much longer term. Neville described the way in which an interaction with a homeless person could be affected by what he described as the 'weird target mania'

...Matt and I went out on the streets a few weeks ago and there is pressure is to get people off the streets. We were talking to one guy - there is the fear of coming off

the streets - you can only talk to them for 5 minutes because they see you again and they are afraid and they vanish away into the night and outside the count area....For those people any intervention disrupts their ecology...I knew people when I started who hid in the bushes in the traffic islands so they couldn't be found even by the soup runs.

For Matt it was clear that the RSU did not understand service delivery. He felt that the civil servants did not have a background in service delivery or of detached services.

The effect on the organisation was not just in service delivery; internal processes, the second issue, could also be compromised, with interference extending to the RSU effectively vetoing staff and indirectly vetoing agency appointments. Matt was unhappy with this process. When bidding for the contract the RSU asked at the presentation who was going to manage this service, and whom St Mungo's would employ.

Neville: The personnel we had to specify - and they met certainly one person running the project who had to be in the management team - we said these are the people who are going to be responsible. They had given them the once over...

In this case the contract award was tied to the idea that certain people making the presentation would be the those undertaking the work.

How does St Mungo's seeks to combat the effects just described? There are opportunities to negotiate back, and Bev pointed to the awareness developed at St Mungo's which assists them in thinking about the RSU.

If we didn't think ideological we could go along with this. And it is a close call - we have adapted to it. We have try to adapt it to us - we've influenced it.

She felt other agencies had not thought through the implications of Government funding which prescribes the way that the work is to be done, particularly in the future. Bev outlined the approach that St Mungo's sought to take: to accept funding, influence the way the project is carried out and develop future strategy.

The idea is...influence the agenda.... Always ...taking a very very active role with government saying we are going to do this but we are going to do it this way. This is the way we want to meet the target and the overall aims but these are the issues we have with the way you are wanting to do it.

This was the deliberative process which is concerned with not accepting the status of a constraining environment. While there was a high level of attention from the RSU via

monthly meetings, St Mungo's used these continually to re-assert its concerns. As Bev phrased it, their response is to say:

these are the problems we have had in this month doing that task you set us - haven't you realised these are the implications of doing that?

A second approach uncovered was in relation to information collection. Here is an area where, again in a highly constraining situation, St Mungo's works to turn the situation around. The RSU's level of involvement was seen by Matt as 'unbelievable.' Staff keep a note of which rough sleepers they have spoken to, and come into the office and add the name to a web based password protected system. The RSU then examines references to individual rough sleepers and the work undertaken. I followed up the subject of the information and surveillance; Matt described it as:

very erratic, intrusive, draining, distracting. They give us money for extra admin support - we know some of the data we are returning won't be able to be turned into anything meaningful. It's dynamic data...the way the database is organised is not helpful...and also we can't analyse it ourselves which we want to -

However the approach at St Mungo's was ingenious. They supply data to the RSU, which may well be the wrong kind of data. One example was the Counting Zones which sometimes cut through the ward boundaries, so the postcodes do not always tally with locations. St Mungo's therefore collects its own figures in a more reliable way. There was a second approach. Access to the RSU database was now being negotiated so that a member of St Mungo's staff who has an MA in information systems management would work with the contractor of the database to have access. Other organisations would not be in that position, Neville felt, because they had not invested in such staff.

I have shown here something of the way that St Mungo's faces constraints on its values in the face of a contracting funding regime: in the external delivery of the service and the internal mechanism of the organisation. However St Mungo's was alert to infringements on its value base underpinning ways of working with street homeless. This comes through an alert staff group who are conscious of their organisational values and seek to defend them. They have adopted negotiating approaches to influence the funder. They have been prepared to develop independent information systems.

4.3.19 Preliminary Assessment of Values Reproduction at St Mungo's

An intriguing issue with St Mungo's is that it holds strongly to organisational

values yet it operates in a **highly constrained funding environment** with 90% state funding, its operations located in **quasi-markets**. Although it has undertaken government contracts which involve a high degree of interference in outcomes and internal processes, St Mungo's keeps its values. It remains 'scruffy' and ungentrified. St Mungo's appears to be an **expert in its field** which may aid its negotiations with local and national government on the issues which remain high profile.

St Mungo's is alert to what it wants to achieve with its client group and negotiates to influence funding programmes wherever it is able. This ability is influenced by **people factors**: a stable team of managers at middle and senior levels highly committed to the organisational values, and active **value carriers** throughout the organisation. **Informal processes** may be operating through longstanding staff members, while for junior staff informal linking occurs through other means, including an active trade union group. There are supporting **organisational structures** geared to making the managers and staff involved, but the number of cross-linking mechanisms may be small for an organisation of this size. The **board** is described as committed to the risk taking which St Mungo's needs, and the **protected membership** afforded by the Industrial and Provident society structure enables it to retain control of the values and mission from outside incursion. Explicit links to **social movements** were eschewed and sometimes seen as unhelpful. There was evidence of implicit links to such movements around justice and rights issues and Cold Weather funding programmes had provided ready recruits.

4.4 Brighton Urban Design and Development (BUDD)

Cliche: Stop the Store Campaign

Their banner: To stimulate, encourage and initiate sustainable urban design and development through an inclusive participatory process.

4.4 BUDD Overview

4.4.1 A Contrasting Minor Case of Values in a Small Informal Organisation

The research was targeted at middle sized organisations. However during the study I had occasion to be involved in one very small organisation/group. This does not form part of the main study but does illuminate values issues which applied to the other organisations.

I became involved in 1999 in a campaign group seeking sustainable development solutions to a proposed large scale development adjacent to Brighton Station. **Brighton Urban Design and Development (BUDD)** saw itself as a conduit for local concerns and a forum for wider debate about urban life. This involvement reminded me of the way small local campaigns maintain their values and made me curious to see how questions from my main study would work in this 'rawer' kind of organisation/group. I gained agreement to do interviews with three key members of the group. BUDD is located in figure 3.1 at the extreme end of the spectrum. Some of the questions used with the main case studies, were adapted to take account of the size of the group.

The group formed in 1997 when 15 - 20 people met just before plans for a new development adjacent to Brighton railway station were announced. The group led a campaign to oppose the original scheme and to seek better alternatives through campaigning activities, a public inquiry, council consultation events and other local events. BUDD describes itself as aiming to

....stimulate, encourage and initiate sustainable urban design and development and through an inclusive participatory process, to combat social exclusion and to generate schemes that integrate social, cultural, environmental and economic benefits to Brighton and Hove.

(BUDD News April 2002¹)

¹ www.BUDDbrighton.org

4.4.2 BUDD and this Research

I interviewed three people, Gillian, Bevan and Kevin, between February and April 2001 who were identified as leading people in the group. They had all been involved in BUDD since spring 1997. I found it surprisingly easy to ask my research questions, despite the existing acquaintance, although the interviews took more circuitous routes than some of those in my main cases.

4.4.3 BUDD Values

The group received no financial support from grants or sales although it did run a subscription system ('become a BUDD buddy!') where supporters were asked to make a donation of £5 or £10. The work was undertaken exclusively by volunteers. There was no official membership but an address list. Key members were identified by who attended meetings which occurred every 2 to 6 weeks. Bevan suggested there were different layers to involvement with no rigid distinctions between them:

There are may be 10 key people, an immediate phone tree of 30 or 40 who we would call to a larger meeting, but then, if calling a public meeting...we could get 500 people, with a petition even more. All of those could be seen to be supporters. They are not members but supporters.

The group had no constitution and no formal legal status although there had been long held plans to register as an Industrial and Provident Society. Both Bevan and Gillian suggest there has been resistance to this.

Gillian: Not being official means it could be open to more radical initiatives....as soon as you become constituted you have to solidify the narrative of the organisation but at the moment BUDD remains fluid

I was interested to see how values processes worked in a small informal network group like this. The mission statement had been arrived at by Participatory Appraisal Techniques at a meeting but there is no officially agreed statement of values. Kevin suggested BUDD had two main thrusts: to enable local people to voice their concerns about the proposed site and and to act as a learning and informing forum.

In BUDD the values are often closer to the personal values of those involved. Gillian emphasised that there was not one BUDD but several, there were the 'hairy, hippy, radical types', there were those who had unconventional work or lifestyles, there were those who wanted to defend aspects of the local economy including recycling, second-hand

markets and the nearby local working class High Street. She also saw it as 'a celebration of a spirit of Brighton', for the 'tacky parts and the artists', for the people she felt had made the town dynamic but were now being excluded. Kevin also saw it as a 'spirit', he emphasised concern for a sustainable environmental development and against third world food production for export markets. All three emphasised a politics of 'heart and mind' that had links with Reclaim the City and anti-globalisation protests. They saw evidence of this through the carnival dancers BUDD attracted to its street rallies.

BUDD has values around social change with links to environmental movements, there are also process values, around a strong ideal of rights of participation in decision making and of a different kind of political action, of the importance of education and public debate as a means and ends. There is a valuing of the divergent and the unconventional in city life. I now want to examine some of the factors operating in this informal network group which may sustain its values

Factors Affecting Values

4.4.4 People Processes

The group has open meetings and there is no veto to joining, nevertheless after questioning I discovered there is a filtering process however informal. Bevan pointed out people arrive with some knowledge of the group and are attracted to the cause. Friendship patterns count, as Gillian said, and some people are encouraged to get more involved. There is also a process of 'moulding' people into the group ways by direct working together. Gillian, for example, had worked with a new person on a newsletter to encourage a style that fitted the BUDD approach.. Those that don't fit tend to leave.

Gillian: In terms of values it is not irrelevant to say - who do you want to go and have a drink with at the end of the meeting - if you don't have that...you don't stay around, which is why it is very important that new people get invited along for a drink and at least get a chance to decide if they ever want to do it again.

Kevin described how the BUDD story is retold to new people to explain the groups actions. There is also a strong lifestyle element to the group especially for those centrally involved. Gillian now felt some guilt that she had a full time job and was less available, Bevan had considered if the group might create jobs for those involved nearly full time. Several former core people were cited as being recessive now but still available: Janice on connections to carnival groups, Tony on constitutional issues, James on visioning exercises.

4.4.5 Structure

BUDD is not quite like an organisation. It resembles a **network** approach to organising at community level (Gilchrist and Taylor:1997). It has some key people, supporters, a mailing list, people who will come to meetings, people who will sign a petition, and there is no rigid boundary between these bands of involvement. However like many non-hierarchical groups there is a discernible informal hierarchy where some people carry more weight in decisions as is familiar in the literature on both women's organisations (Brown:1992) and in other alternative groups (Rothschild-Whitt:1982:44).

4.4.6 Income Streams

As an unfunded group BUDD sits outside the funding environment that would orientate it to particular market. It did, however, receive local authority funds to support a bid for Industrial and Provident Society registration and that model leans it toward a possible future in the co-operative and mutual trading world. It is funded directly by its supporters.

4.4.7 Social Movements

The campaign see its links to wider issues concerning exploitation of developing countries, unfair trading, and anti-capitalist protests. Some thought the group might actively turn to direct action at a future point. The characteristics of people's involvement and the variety and informality of the approach, cited in 3.1 and 3.2 make it closely allied to conceptions of a social movement seen as 'a network of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organizations, engaged in a political or cultural conflict, on the basis of a shared collective identity' Diani (1992:13).

Values Example

4.4.8 A Deal with the Developers?

A key values example was when at a crucial point the group decided not to accept a deal with the developers which might have yielded a financial asset. The compromises this would involve for BUDD's values and goals were seen as too much according to Bevan:

They [the developers] have said 'you could get control over the community component of the development if you wanted - they might be good for you, you might get a job out of it, you might get some land out it, a smaller development out of this for yourselves, wouldn't that be good for you, for BUDD?' Yes, it would be

good but that is too big a compromise for me. At this point we are not willing to make that kind of compromise.

It is noteworthy that at moments like these when Bevan was unsure of his stance the message from the wider supporters, the **membership**, was a decisive motivator:

There have been times where I have wavered about some aspect, was it getting too big, should we compromise on something, yet whenever we have taken it back to discuss, the message has always been clear 'no compromise', 'keep going.'

I asked Kevin what would be a threat to the values BUDD wanted to uphold and he was quite stark: 'apathy or betrayal' by the supporters. BUDD's nature was as an independent campaigning group. This was a decisive advantage, according to Kevin, and one that a professional group could never achieve:

[The developer's] latest tack...is to say: 'okay there may be areas we can't agree on but let's put those to one side, let's develop the areas we can agree on,' and it's just slipping the knife in gently...we don't have these big business interests - we have ideas and we are committed - that is very worrying to these people.

4.4.9 Reproduction of Values in a Small Informal Organisation

This brief examination of BUDD suggests the following points. A group or network like BUDD relies little on financial benefits from **public or private sector markets**. What is of overriding importance is the time commitment, financial support, and the **resources** that can be gleaned from its **network of supporters**, what we may term its **membership** base. Their belief in the cause is therefore vital for sustaining the group - there is no organisational 'slack' without this. The **friendship and affiliations** between supporters, and to some extent common **lifestyles** and beliefs, the occupying of a similar habitus in Bourdieu's terms, looks to facilitate and cement the membership bonds. After-meeting drinks, Christmas events, can take up nearly as much time as the meetings themselves. **Structures** are informal but nevertheless discernible - there is a well organised phone and mailing list and active email discussion list. An **inner core group** is visible and, I suggest, some degree of deferment to members of that group in difficult decision making. At this stage of the group's development the **key value carriers** largely correspond to those in the core, particularly Kevin, Gillian and Bevan. However there are also already signs of the **external advocates**, those who were active near the start and are now dormant but provide part of the extended support circle. Arguably BUDD is not so much linked to, as part of, **social movements** around sustainable environmental development and access

to decision making in civic governance. This seems to provide a drive and energy to activities as links can be consciously made to actions happening elsewhere.

I have shown here how some of the factors I examined in my main cases have a resonance to groups of a very different nature. Let me now turn to the extreme other end of the spectrum in examining an organisation that had roots, over 150 years ago, as small as BUDD.

Chapter 5:

Case Studies from trading organisations

This chapter presents the second half of the results from the investigation. Each case is presented in turn with some amount of analysis with the presentation. A more detailed analysis follows in chapter 6. The cases presented here are:

Case 5:

5.1 The Centre for Alternative Technology

An alternative energy visitor centre

Case 6:

5.2 Infinity Wholefoods Co-operative

A wholefoods worker co-operative

Case 7:

5.3 Coin Street Community Builders

A community development regeneration trust

Case 8:

5.4 Oxford Swindon and Gloucester with Lincoln Co-operative Society

A contrasting minor case of two large consumer co-operatives

5.1 The Centre for Alternative Technology

The cliché: That piss and wind place .

Their banner: Searching for globally sustainable, whole and ecologically sound technologies and ways of life...by inspiring, enabling and informing...

5.1 CAT Overview

5.1.1 Introduction

Symbolically the Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT) represents itself in its logo by a stylised windmill. A large wind turbine is the towering sight if you approach the Centre, as I did, appropriately by bicycle. A concise description of the Centre is however not easy. It is, at the most obvious level, a visitor attraction in mid-Wales which aims to educate the public about environmental sustainability. To this end it has working exhibits of solar panels, windmills, house insulation and energy saving ideas alongside a working organic gardening and waste and recycling schemes. It is also a demonstration project, aiming to 'show by doing,' and has an active research and consultancy centre. CAT is an information centre offering advice by phone and email. There was originally a thriving live-in community based at 'the quarry', as it is affectionately known, although this has dwindled in recent years. Another way of looking at CAT is as a living icon of the UK environmental movement, conceived within a few years of the birth of Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace. Today it is still supported by a range of volunteers who form part of a broad environmental network and many of the staff would consciously acknowledge their place in such a movement. It is now an established institution, one which Prince Charles can prominently wish well in a CAT publication ('Crazy Idealists'). It can also be seen as a late 70's idealistic, mainly English speaking hippy colony in Wales, a back-to-the-land community turned commercial success.

Harper sums these roles up when he suggests it is 'an educational institution...a major tourist attraction...a successful 'alternative' business enterprise..a living/working community..a research centre...a repository of special knowledge and skills..a place of pilgrimage...a wildlife sanctuary...' (Harper 1995).

An issue for CAT is that many of its original 'crazy ideals' are in the process of becoming mainstream policy and the object of large scale research and development throughout the UK and Europe. By the end of the 1990's as Harper puts it 'high sounding environmental values had become mainstream...we had at least captured the moral high ground' (CAT:2000). In that sense CAT has proved its point so what should CAT do

now? Do those original pioneering values need redefinition or re-application? Is it a missionary organisation in danger of achieving its mission?

5.1.2 The Story of CAT

CAT's inception can be dated to February 1974 when the first group began to work on the slate quarry in mid-Wales intending it to be a self sufficient community. Gerard Morgan-Grenville with Diana Brass are credited as the founders and appeared 'well connected.' They were able to attract public figures to visit CAT. The Duke of York came in 1975 and Prince Charles three years later. Increasing visitor demands led to a shift in emphasis and the Centre opened to the public in 1975 (CAT 1995:7). Turning CAT from an alternative community to a visitor centre provided an initial income stream to develop the work and informing visitors became a method for communicating CAT's work (Harper: 1995). Original ideals of differential pay according to needs have now been modified in favour of an equal (low) wage for all permanent staff. Early ideas of rotating jobs and tasks have given ways to an acceptance of specialisms (Harper 1995).

5.1.3 CAT Today

Today there can be up to 100 people working on the site in the summer either as Permanent Staff Members (PSMs), Associate Staff Members (ASMs), casuals or volunteers (short term or long term). PSMs are on permanent contracts, have greater decision making rights, and earn slightly more than associates who are on shorter contracts.

The centre is constituted as both a charity and a Public Liability Company (PLC) but across both structures staff organise themselves as a self managed co-operative. With a turnover of £2m per year from the commercial and charitable side combined, 70,000 visitors per annum, and answering over 13,000 non-visitor inquiries per year, the centre is one of the biggest employers in mid-Wales and contributes substantially to the local economy. In 1998 the overall balance of income to CAT came two thirds from the PLC and one third from the charitable arm. The PLC gained nearly 60% of its income from sales and 36% from visitor admissions. The highest expenditure item was staff costs at 58%. In the charity, donations represented nearly 30% of charitable income, with course fees and residential courses at 24%, and grants at 13%. Staff costs accounted for nearly half of the charitable expenditure. CAT operates strongly in commercial markets, with admissions and sales contributing over 60% to the total income. The grants and donations to the charitable wing of the organisation represent only 15% of total income.

5.1.4 The Research

I had chosen CAT as an organisation operating in commercial markets. In that sense it lies alongside the worker co-operative, Infinity Foods, and the rather hybrid Coin Street. Despite its place in an environmental movement in some ways it is closer in type to organisations such as Ormiston in undertaking practice to influence change. CAT can be characterised as closer to a service organisation, under Handy's (1988:10) model, than a campaigning organisation.

As an established organisation has CAT become an institution that is no longer at the cutting edge? How does it redefine itself now its core message is becoming mainstream? What factors among its staff and supporters enable it to reproduce its values? Do market imperatives impede its reproductive capacity and what effect does the environmental movement have?

A few words about my own relation to CAT are appropriate. I had visited CAT once while living in north Wales as an environmental activist in the late 1970s, and again in 2000 whilst on holiday. CAT occupied a particular place in my own intellectual and political development as part of a movement within which I first became active in politics. Would it be possible to draw on the advantages this conferred, while maintaining a critical perspective? Would I be nostalgically and positively predisposed towards CAT? Or would I become overly critical of an alternative rural lifestyle that has been displaced in me by a more urban perspective? CAT had, in many ways, made a similar journey to myself and engaged with urban issues of sustainability in more pragmatic ways. It therefore became less like visiting a relic from the past and more like resuming contact with an old friend.

The practical arrangements were straight forward. My key informant, Peter Harper, sent me background materials about CAT and we arranged for me to spend three days at CAT in June 2001 to observe the work and conduct interviews. This case was different to the others in several ways. Firstly, all the interviews were done within these three days which gave an intensity to the data collection. Secondly, I was immersed in the workplace more than in the other organisations. The CAT site is available for inspection by having a physical manifestation. Thirdly, I stayed at a staff member's house, and ate and drank with staff in the evenings. The way I as researcher was brought into the organisation was illustrative of the organisational approach.

Following initial guidance from Peter Harper I was free to wander around, sit in the staff tea room, browse around the exhibits and arrange impromptu interviews as opportunities presented. I eventually interviewed 9 people individually and 7 others in two small groups in different parts of the organisation. This group was Norman, Robert, Raymond, Francine, Ursula, Kate, Yorath, Diedre, Jack from admin, finance,

engineering, transportation, the shop, information, and restaurant, development, biology, and consultancy. The restaurant staff were interviewed in two groups, Steven, Betty, Rose, Tanya, Rhianon, Glenys, Flo. In researching this case study interviews, observational techniques and examination of printed documents were used.

CAT and Organisational Values

5.1.5 Espoused Values at CAT

The official values are described in the mission statement which states CAT is:

...concerned with the search for globally sustainable, whole and ecologically sound technologies and ways of life...the role of CAT is to explore and demonstrate a wide range of alternatives, communicating to other people the options for them to achieve positive change in their own lives. This communication involves: inspiring - instilling the desire to change by practical example. Informing - feeding the desire to change by providing the most appropriate information. Enabling - providing effective and continuing support to put the change into practice.

CAT has a holistic approach to its work; integrating ideas and practice relating to land use, shelter, energy conservation and use, diet and health, waste management and recycling. Through its resident community and work organisations, CAT is also committed to the implementation of co-operative principles and the best achievable environmental practices.

(CAT Annual Review 1999)

CAT is locating itself in the field of sustainable development, environmental concern, and ecologically responsible technology. The organisation wants to both 'explore and demonstrate' alternatives and sees itself 'communicating' these to the wider public. With these aspirations in mind it consciously expresses the idea of **wanting to change people's lives in practical ways**. The technique for doing this will be through '**inspiring**' by acting as a role model, '**informing**' by providing information, and by '**enabling**' by means of on-going training, education and consultancy. It sets out some of the issues it is concerned with in specific terms (such as land use, energy conservation, waste management) and stresses these are entwined and that both **ideas and concrete practice** are part of the CAT approach. Finally its method of **working through co-operative principles** is stressed as well as the search for the best realistic environmental practice.

From the printed documents it is clear that CAT is engaged in a debate about its changing principles or how these are applied. Ross, who holds a senior role at CAT, writing in the '25 Years of CAT' booklet, states that the technologies pioneered by CAT such as composting, wind and solar power, 'have been successfully assimilated into the mainstream' which suggests two directions - a 'centre for fairly green mainstream

technologies' or 're-invent what we mean by alternative technology by widening our definition to include some new and little explored terrain.' He clearly favours the second.

CAT is coy on its key strengths which might be ventured as 25 years of accumulated experience from committed staff, volunteers and supporters who worked to develop these alternatives.

5.1.6 Key Stakeholder's Accounts of CAT Values

Most staff cited the 'instil, enable and inform' phrase when asked about CAT's values but other areas were stressed too. Firstly, the 'doing and telling' nature of CAT's work was mentioned which makes it distinct from campaigning. Secondly, others talked of the shift in application of CAT's values. Thirdly, staff emphasised the co-operative nature at CAT. Let me illustrate these aspects.

Ross felt that despite the large number of environmental organisations there were 'very few people actually trying to deliver [environmental solutions]...and making sense of the compromises.' Diedre described it as 'practical solutions' a 'testing out' which complements the campaigning work of Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth. Jack, a newer member to CAT but with extensive experience elsewhere in the environmental movement, pointed to the early days: 'the power in doing turned out to be such a strong case example that people wanted to come and see it' hence the move to researching and testing viable alternatives. He contrasted CAT's work from campaigning organisations, as being affective 'at a much more personal level...the power of saying we tried it, we tested it...' a 'hands dirty approach' which he valued with CAT. This approach can be witnessed in the exhibits on the visitor circuit. Different designs of solar panels are shown side-by-side with the relative power outputs.

The restaurant provides an additional insight with Betty feeling that CAT was about 'giving people an insight into different kinds of technologies and organic food,' or 'a hands on feel' according to Steve and 'showing people by doing.' The restaurant provided 'good food and as organic as possible and as local as possible and it's all vegetarian and GM free.' They reported an skeptical customer who asked where the power for the cookers and fridges came from. He was shown the solar panels on the roof and was duly impressed.

Raymond described the distinction between CAT and a campaigning organisation:

We have never campaigned as such like Greenpeace... but what we were proposing in terms of turbines, solar power, biomass...was quite new. Now that has become a much more acceptable industry...there are organisations that think they always have to be radical...but we are actually here to encourage and produce sustainable

communities...

Many at CAT have a strong belief in taking environmental action, Francine saw it as:

a very strong belief that they are 'doing something to help the planet.' I hate saying it like that really but that is what people say...they do want to do something that will make a difference.

5.1.7 Shifts in Values to Replicable Approaches

Ross described how CAT had moved from a 1970's vision of self sufficiency. Sustainability is not now seen as equivalent to self-sufficiency. The director of development reminded me the original vision of CAT was that:

...30 people would occupy this derelict slate quarry and live as a self sufficient community with no visitors, work out what works and what doesn't and write a paper to government and say this is how we can all survive!

Grid electricity was linked to nuclear and fossil fuel generation. The old vision was for CAT to generate their own environmentally friendly electricity. This is not now seen as replicable, so feeding renewable energy into the grid is preferred. Raymond felt the social side was critical. Compost toilets, were 'as green as you can get', but they are not socially acceptable. Smaller changes to existing flush toilets but with wider uptake could achieve greater impact. Balancing the 'technological and social' optimums was critical. Norman cited one of the early pioneers who dug a floor out himself but suggested CAT was more pragmatic now and would hire a machine.

5.1.8 Co-operative Working Values

Francine was still in her probationary period but had a senior responsibility for human resources. She described how CAT 'aspires to co-operative values' and that 'everybody should have the opportunity to be involved in decision making processes' describing this as 'dear to all our hearts.' She found CAT special because it was co-operatively run although this isn't emphasised to visitors. She saw the values of the organisation as the values of the staff. These are not necessarily identical but what she was emphasising here was that these values were held and acted upon by most people in the organisation. She felt that compared to other voluntary organisations there was a strong adherence to core values although less was written down at CAT. 'I feel that everyone has got a commitment to the same core values.' This was demonstrated in CAT's structure and the pay equality amongst PSMs.

5.1.9 Types of Values at CAT

In the mission statement there is a mixture of components including values. Indeed Bakker (1993:25) suggests mission statements usually contain five elements: a scene setting which describes the field the organisation is working in, a stating of long term strategic intentions, the organisation's key strengths, its broad strategies to achieve the mission and 'the values the organisation adheres to in pursuit of its mission.' Values populate different parts of the CAT statement quoted in 2.1. Firstly, there are **social change values** represented in commitments to the environment and improving technological practice. There is a related value about wanting to change people's lives. These represent the bold broad social change aspirations of CAT. Secondly, there are **process values**: the approach is to be doing and telling. Thirdly, there are process values of ways of organising together through co-operative principles. CAT has strong **product values** connected with what it is promoting (ecologically sensitive technologies), which can be construed as social change values. The **process values**, of co-operative working principles, might or might not have an effect on other two. Indeed the customer might not be aware of these values that are concerned with the internal running of an organisation. There is probably an implicit working process value, which we shall come to shortly, which is an aspiration to live the principles. CAT staff that arrived in BMW cars, and saw no connection between their personal lifestyle and their work, might expect some degree of censure.

Factors Affecting Values at CAT

5.1.10 People Processes and Value Carriers

Jack, like others at CAT, used lots of 'agency' language. He spoke of the organisation's original vision 'but it takes people to achieve that vision.' This reinforces the idea, accepted in this thesis, that people play an active, if not always fully conscious part, in reproducing organisational values. The values at CAT are bound up in its vision and are reproduced by organisational actors in daily practice even though the working context has changed markedly. Norman saw the original philosophy as a strong factor in keeping CAT like it is. Reading 'The CAT Story' showed the many arguments about core points which he felt they had got right.

Norman: On those major things we are still following the path they set up...because they set those core values up we are still living with them.

The founders were also inspiring to Jack. The continuity with the early spirit influences staff today he felt, the sense of 'we're all in the same boat - it is all a quite important vestige of that [early founding spirit].' The on-site residents community is for Jack a lasting symbol, a sign that CAT's ideas are about sustainable living and 'integral in keeping that ethos.' The commitment made by the pioneers impressed him:

...they came here and, confronted with a pile of slate and no soil had the determination to grow their own food, generate their own energy, dispose of their own water...I have something to live up to by comparison...there are people here who date back to an era...and have expectations that people will be prepared to do what it takes...that helps immensely to perpetuate a certain set of attitudes...certain things get propagated in organisations to do with expectations.

Kate, like many at CAT, volunteered that it was the people who work at CAT that kept its values alive but was able to break this down further:

You have sufficient number of people who have been here long enough who remember what it is about...it helps maintain everyone on a fairly even keel...you need a balance between long termers...and newer people who can be more enthusiastic...

Norman felt the long term staff provided 'the best connections to the past' and were seen as key **value carriers** connected to the **founding members**. In section 3.4 I will show how newer people can also affect the organisational values.

Value carriers here have a lifestyle commitment. Jack had moved to this rural area to live and work at CAT. This was not simply going for a new job, he was joining an ethos and choosing a change of **lifestyle**. Francine reinforced this: 'you wouldn't choose to move to [a remote part of] Wales for £12,600 unless you had the same basic set of values.' Both Jack and Francine are relatively new and this aspect of CAT is closer to them. Francine saw moving as a personal expression of those values, something like an initiation which represented an act of commitment. Francine, Ursula and Raymond made the same point:

Francine: People come here to live which is something unique about CAT. People move here not just for the work but to live the values as well.

Ursula: People make big changes in their lives and usually take a huge pay cut to come because they really believe in what we are about...that's why I came here...

Raymond: I sit here doing accounts all day but I am here because I am committed to the organisation. I am interested in sustainable living.

Diedre, an established PSM, drew attention to tensions in the close knit committed

group. She felt although CAT had tried to become more professional it was still a 'fluffy' organisation. I asked her what 'fluffy' meant.

Diedre:...dedicated to what we are doing so we try to be as supportive as possible...there is work to nurture the social...some of us actually live at the centre...the lines between work, social and home are a bit more blurred.

This highlights some of the close bonds in this community. A contrasting view on values came from Norman. At the end of our interview he commented on how difficult some of my questions had been. I asked which questions.

Norman: The one about the core values of CAT - I suppose most days I don't think about it.

Not everyone, even in this very close community, is able to fully articulate the values, they may have a more implicit understanding or find the values embedded tacitly in their work activity. Norman provided another instructive insight. He had raised at a PSM meeting whether people recycled their own domestic waste or had solar water heaters at home. The notion that people might practice what they preach is seen as a legitimate issue.

The above discussion points to how even new staff at CAT may act as conscious **value carriers** while others **act out the values** embedded in their work. There is not always a rigid divide. Norman, in raising issues of how far staff were congruent at home with CAT values, was contesting organisational values, while he felt less consciously aware on other issues. The sense in which values become embedded in the process or product can be glimpsed in my discussions with restaurant staff. Most of this group came from the immediate locality and might not at first sight be seen to be aligned with the broader environmental movement. They had certainly not moved to the area for their posts like those in professionalised roles. These staff had worked between two and five years at CAT. Tanya, as a PSM, was clear she needed to work at CAT to pay for her mortgage. Rhianon even felt it necessary to apologise:

I came up here - perhaps I shouldn't say this - because I was working in a factory and it shut down. I am buying my house and just had to find work.

CAT does seem much more accepted locally than in the early days when it was seen as an English hippy enclave. However there is evidence of different motivations across staff groups, and different levels of upholding the values. Restaurant staff are aware of this difference. They may not always proclaim the CAT message but they remain highly committed to CAT's values. Several incidents emerged in the discussions - concern for the

contents of organic fly killers, careful local sourcing of goods wherever possible, and providing vegetarian and GM-free products. There was also a clear pride in producing high quality food - one staff member was pleased a friend came to CAT especially for the salads. This staff group are not necessarily 'lifestyle' CAT value holders, like Francine, Diedre, Ursula and Raymond, but this does not prevent them maintaining CAT values, through immersion in an organisational culture emphasising environmental concerns.

5.1.11 External Advocates

'External advocates' is my term to refer to people who inhabit a realm around the organisations and are seen as supporters of the organisation. Mostly these are people with no formal roles in the organisation but who maintain a connection through informal links. Several ex-CAT employees, founders and supporters were identified who have moved to other organisations but who play supportive roles when required but not from positions of formal authority.

For example, there is a CAT membership association which acts like a **supporters group** with a magazine and an Annual conference. It has no influence over internal organisational affairs. Staff suggest there is a vast CAT Diaspora which stretches from royalty to Greenpeace.

5.1.12 Informal Processes

Norman said he came to understand CAT through talking and listening to people informally and Raymond emphasised the role of the staff cafe, Tea Chest. Norman felt he was included. From an engineering background:

...we are usually in the darkest corners so we don't tend to be in the social swing [but here] we get to all the meetings...[and as a PSM] have the same responsibilities as everyone else.

New staff's conscious decision to move to the area creates another factor of interest: strong incentives to join with others out of work for affiliation needs. An analogy might be ex-patriot enclaves. Francine found CAT 'a very social place' with a high degree of socialising outside work while Jack described being made 'incredibly welcome' and felt this was a deliberative investment. I experienced some of this myself during the pub evening on my second night. Opportunities for discussion and debate on an informal basis seem to provide opportunities for values reinforcement.

5.1.13 Organisational Structure

Over 25 years CAT has developed an interlocking set of structures which have important implications for values maintenance and renewal. The focus here is on staff structures. For organisations of CAT's size maintaining involvement while retaining effective decision making can be hard. From a values perspective how are co-operative and social progress values to be nurtured without a stifling bureaucracy? Raymond admitted this difficulty:

The best decisions are based on informed debate and that can be difficult to do in a co-op that is so large.

An indication of this was that the structures were to be scrutinised through a forthcoming management review. Raymond saw the Overview group and PSM monthly meetings as the organisation's authoritative body. Overview group has the authority in the organisation and the status and respect of the rest of the staff.' But, apart from PSM meetings, he felt it was the only such authoritative body and so became a bottle neck for decision making.

5.1.14 PSM Meetings

Ross, director of development, felt the structure included people through differing levels of involvement. The staff structure, with PSMs, ASMs, casuals, short term and long term volunteers, aimed to provide different levels of responsibilities and powers. There are 40 Permanent Staff Members (PSMs), paid £12,600; a group of Associate Staff Members (ASMs) paid £9,000; and casual staff on a hourly rate. PSMs manage ASMs and mostly the volunteers too - long term (6 months typically) and short term (2 weeks typically). Everyone could attend the monthly staff meetings, the PSM meeting, but it is obligatory for PSMs.

5.1.15 Overview Group

If the monthly PSM meeting functions as something like a sovereign plenum, the Overview group would be the executive. Overview group consists of the directors of development, administration and finance with three other people elected for 18 month stints from PSMs. Kate thought the structure at CAT is unusual in that Overview group meets weekly - but its decisions can be overturned by the much larger PSM meeting. Overview had originally been established because decisions had become too protracted in the large group.

Diedre felt the structures were positive:

...one person can't block things. They can put their input in but the structure of the organisation is very important.

The structure was complicated and even some PSMs admitted it took some years to fully understand:

It is very intricate and complicated...This lobbying and putting the manifesto up and objecting to things and the procedure then that goes on from an objection to a ruling...I don't think I know it all absolutely even now...Overview committee try to find another solution, then if you object to that it goes to a PSM for ratification, eventually to a straw [poll]...

Yorath also pointed out the difficulty of understanding how CAT works.

...when you first come here - you're not really sure how the place works...people are walking around aimlessly not appearing to do anything - but everything does get done eventually - it's an amazing process - and no-one knows how it works!

The structures provide many opportunities for cross-checking and scrutiny of decisions. Despite the reported need to now reform these in the light of continuing organisational growth they seemed to have worked well. Some people were frustrated at long decision making processes. Jack, however, gave a counter example pointing out a prospective downturn in tourists due to a foot-and-mouth epidemic in 2001 had been dealt with quickly.

5.1.16 Other Meetings

There are no **away days** for staff perhaps because of the regularity of PSM meetings and the annual training day to which all staff come to examine the strategy and budget. Organisational **devolution** was widely espoused. According to Ross, on many issues, such as restaurant foods, the organisation had devolved the responsibility for 'those compromises, those values judgments' to the relevant departments. Staff in some departments did however claim there was 'interest' or 'interference' from other departments. A **mentoring system** means new staff will have two mentors: a work mentor who knows their area of work, and a personal mentor chosen by the staff member to help their orientation into the organisation. Francine, for example, meets monthly with her personal mentor. The mentoring system carries on indefinitely, and everyone now has a mentor even the reluctant staff!

5.1.17 Selection of Staff

Selection processes are given much attention, as is familiar in many co-operatives. Jack recalled the thoroughness of his own interview panel to select people who would fit. Pre-selecting people in agreement with the ethos was good gate-keeping, he argued, but he went further:

Even when people arrive these organisations have the power to transform people.

Jack reflected on other organisational cultures with a shared ethos that he had experienced. One large UK charity sent new staff such as him on a challenging development course, 'they came out wanting to wave Kalashnikovs!' Similarly a leading environmental organisation's induction course had sent him on a non-violent direct action course. Video images of the organisation's senior accountant engaged in direct action conveyed strongly the organisational ethos of everyone as an activist. Jack pointed out how:

accumulated instances like these can be sufficiently powerful - combined with the organisational ambient atmosphere and energy - that they are capable of changing how you see things and how you behave about things.

He called these 'transformative organisations' in that they aim to transform society but they also have this effect on the people who become involved in them without them always noticing it is happening. This links to some of Schein's ideas on the 'brainwashing' and 'indoctrination' of people in organisations. Schein was describing culture change programmes in large companies, a process the corporation intends as a way of them absorbing staff into the organisational ethos. He argues these programmes seek to instil 'a shared commitment to new values - as well as punishment for those who depart from them - they constitute coercive persuasion' (Coutu 2002:102). Arguably at CAT the more informal social processes are entered into willingly. Nevertheless the effects can be significant. Norman had found the induction course highly influential. He enthusiastically cited some of the cameos from the course, such as the enormous savings in energy consumption by not leaving videos and TVs on standby mode.

Volunteers also undergo serious induction. Diedre described the process as involving a trial week. Here they will be talked to a great deal, closely supervised, sent on CAT courses, encouraged to read the publications, and answer questions from the general public under guidance.

A commitment to CAT's values is seen as needing to percolate through the organisation. Raymond argued that Finance Department might be thought to require technical skills:

...with no environmental beliefs at all because it is a straight forward accountancy role. But then again it isn't because the organisation is not straight forward. It's a trading organisation, a charity and a public limited company. So the very nature of the company and the way it operates tends to inform...the fact that we don't do things like Beechams...

Additional processes for new staff include a three and six month review to assist the new recruit and assess their progress. After six months a decision is taken as to whether the newcomer will remain. This decision requires collective approval with existing staff being given 48 hours to place comments.

Here I want to make the following point. Taken together the activities such as CAT courses, staff meetings and informal socialising outside work mean that for new staff there is a high degree of supervision, interaction and observation. This makes the possibility of a 'value misfit' being more easily detected or corrected. In effect CAT has devised processes to protect entry to its membership.

5.1.18 PLC Constitutional Guarantees

CAT was the only organisation studied which contained a PLC, albeit a rather unusual one. Profits have never been distributed to 'B' shareholders, and these shareholders have no right to vote on policy matters. These shareholders are seen as supporters who wish to invest money so CAT can access capital. There is no open market by which shares can be passed on. A matching service is run for those who wish to regain their capital and they are put in touch with prospective buyers. The danger of entryism by groups opposed to CAT's mission is therefore avoided. The only privilege such shareholders receive is to lend their money. In addition, to guard against a staff group deciding to radically change CAT's direction the organisation is bound into a trust with guardian trustees. These represent key people in the environmental movement and early founders. The two guardian shares are held in a trust called the Society for Environmental Improvement Trust. These constitutional protections provide an ingenious attempt to separate capital from decision making. The organisation however still gains access to capital funds. The current staff group have the most day-to-day control over organisational direction but they are bounded within the wider environmental movement, in an extreme case, by the possible intervention of guardian trustees. The memorandum and articles of association state a commitment to environmental issues although not necessarily a commitment to co-operative values. Ross explains the PLC structure this way:

The B shareholders simply entrust their money to us for an ethical mission but they don't have any control.

The trustees are not members of staff but they are environmentalists, some of whom previously worked at CAT. Raymond pointed out the share issue had been constructed to avoid control passing to the shareholders:

...the majority of the shareholders of the organisation bought their shares in the full knowledge that there won't ever be a dividend or it will be very small. The majority of them are our supporters. The shares...funded the railway construction...we don't have corporate shareholders...the shares that have dividends don't have voting rights - so there is no risk of a massive cult buying it up...anyway it wouldn't affect the decision making process, it would just mean they had given us some money.

5.1.19 Income Streams

CAT can be located as an organisation operating predominately in commercial markets. To what extent does the commercial operation threaten or compromise CAT's values?

Yorath saw most visitors and felt some saw it as 'very commercial' especially those who had visited when it first opened. Nevertheless he saw the business as essential.

...it is a nice balance between being commercial and being ethical...it is business-like enough to survive. Without the business this place would go under.

There appears to be a **favourable policy climate** toward environmental issues. If this is so we might assume there is a **favourable market** for CAT's endeavours.

Raymond put the balance between market and wider aims clearly, with commerce a servant to the organisation's main purpose:

What we are not really interested in is commercial enterprise. We are interested in making a surplus so we can expand and continue...the trading arms of the organisation are there in the business of making a profit...with the aim of providing resources and finance for the rest of the organisation - it is not for any other reason.

Ross, as a member with a senior role and on Overview, made it clear the organisation saw financial self sustainability crucial to survival.

We aim to produce the revenue funding we use through trading...That's probably why we have been here 25 years - it's a philosophy of earning your own money. However there was some resistance by workers at CAT to developing the site in

the mid 80s - some feared a Disney style development.

The £1m share issue enabled CAT to develop the cliff railway which provides a bold entrance to the attractions on the hill. The charity trustees led this thinking, according to Ross, with the view of attracting the general public rather than the committed. CAT now admits its location within the tourist industry. The shop, the restaurant and consultancy section were examined to see how values intersected with the commercial side.

5.1.20 The Restaurant

Tanya saw the aims of the **restaurant** as 'trying to educate people about eating better food' but she was clear the restaurant provided an income stream. One aim was:

...to make as much money as possible to support the charitable aims of the company...There are certain departments on site that make a profit. We are one of the main ones.

Do values and income stream conflict? Tanya was quite open about this 'yes, you can't do it 100% and make money.' Bottled water would be bought locally but some vegetables needed to be brought from further afield. Tanya was aware of arguments about how far food travelled and tried to source foods locally:

We do try to get mostly organic and get things from local communities, whether it is a local bakery or milkman, we try to buy most things from Wales. It is not always possible but we try.

Some visitors complained about packaging on some biscuits but restaurant staff felt they had to be open about such compromises.

5.1.21 The Shop

The **shop** provides a steady income throughout the year, especially with the growing mail order business. It sells to both visitors and course participants. Ursula phrased it this way:

We are commercial - yes - but that is not our primary aim - we are here to do our mission statement.

I questioned whether the shop could be successful in its own right, separate from CAT, Ursula was clear:

...that's not what we are about at all. We are a successful shop but that's only part of it. We are here for the greater good We are about saving the planet and we are committed to that.

Were products that would not be stocked because they contradicted CAT's values? Ursula wouldn't stock plastic goods, products from the Far East using exploited labour, and products with certain kinds of PVC. There was a written policy on acceptable products. She also positively stocked some lines such as fair-traded and local goods. She reported customers did make suggestions, but goods were not just sold because the customer wanted them and she would explain why certain items could not be stocked.

5.1.22 Consultancy

Jack's work at CAT involved him in a subtler market operation: assisting commercial organisations to improve their environmental impact. The consultancy work was not 'something that looks like that of other environmental consultants.' For Jack, the work was about 'instilling the vision.' The issue of influencing the operations of other organisations links into debates in management literature on the organisational environment. I suggested he was 'embedding ideas of ethical operations within commercial companies...a sort of reverse take over...' Jack thought this was possible. He was alive to the danger that CAT might be used to give such companies undeserved green credentials. He felt, though, that the influence was not one-way, that organisations were susceptible to shifts in their operations and beliefs. CAT might affect an industrial field, implanting progressive practices, leading to a wider diffusion of progressive environmental practice which became the norm in a given sector. This illustrates CAT's awareness of its active 'agency' in propagating its ideas.

5.1.23 Location in State/ commercial Markets

One degenerative danger for CAT could be developing commercially successful products while the social visioning work became more peripheral. CAT has managed this issue, whether consciously or by default, by spinning off companies. Aber instruments, which measures bacteria, and Dwlys Engineering, which produces hydro solar photovoltaic cells, were two cited. They have both retained close links with CAT. Raymond explained:

...they are basically a commercial version that grew out of CAT...they have gone off...[but] we are still friendly with both companies...They are totally separate from CAT but there are a lot of friendship links.

A question I raised with several staff was what would stop CAT becoming 'just another business?' Tanya's thought what distinguished CAT was the co-operative structure. Rhianon felt that it wouldn't work as a conventional business:

If a business man came and took it over and made it a proper business with lots of hierarchy - it wouldn't work.

What would not work about it? She felt that nobody could tell CAT people what to do or not do. The more established workers, 'the dinosaurs', were seen as set in their ways and wouldn't change. I asked what would happen when the 'dinosaurs' retired, would change be conceivable then? However they seemed to envisage a reproduction of values of sorts. 'We'll be dinosaurs then! We'll be set in our ways!' They exhorted me to not be negative 'because we wouldn't change it!'

Kay thought the differences between CAT and a conventional business was the way independence strengthened CAT's message. Kate put it this way:

We are careful not to get attached to any particular brand or organisation as a funding source...[CAT] would stop being distinct from other organisations...and just become a big corporate machine...

I asked her why that would be bad. 'I think at some stage you will then compromise your aims.' Norman suggested that any company putting forward a given strategy could be suspected of commercial motives but CAT had no pecuniary interest.

We can claim quite rightly that we are impartial...We don't get grants. We get some money from Waste Services - but there is nothing that makes us beholden to them to toe the party line. We have got this name now...everybody knows we are green - environmentally friendly and energy conscious. And we are independent.

The smaller charitable arm of CAT, has deliberately not been examined as this is a more familiar structure from the organisations studied in chapter 4. What is distinctive structurally about CAT is the combination of co-operative working under a charity and PLC umbrella.

5.1.24 Summary of Market Forces

CAT has a reputable brand which can be attractive for large commercial organisations seeking environmental credentials. Debates have been held about which organisations it would be acceptable to undertake consultancy with. Jack suggested large companies were rarely monolithic. There were always some individuals who agreed with CAT with whom it was possible to work. Organisations like CAT are not simply moulded

by an environmental voluntary/business sector field. It is actively seeking to influence large chemical and energy producers in other fields as a prime purpose.

Sponsorship is perhaps more controversial. Yorath cited the funding for the 'Atty Building' which came from landfill funds. He felt 'taking money from a bad thing and giving it to a good thing is probably a good idea' but others disagreed. Sponsorship from large companies remains controversial for CAT.

A good place to end this section on markets is to consider Ross, who sees his role as a facilitator of plans from the different departments. Summing up his role Ross said:

I try to take an average of where we think we need to go, looking at where the environment movement will be in 3 - 5 years time so we are in a position to deliver the right services at the right time.

This is an interesting quote because it shows him thinking of the *environmental movement* as CAT's market. This brings us neatly to the next section.

5.1.25 Social Movements

What effect does the environmental movement, with which CAT has a clear alliance, have as a sustainer for organisational values? Jack identifies CAT as located in the wider environmental movement. At the 25th Anniversary of CAT the previous year 'the association between CAT and the family of...the environmental movement' was highlighted. There was a CAT diaspora: these were people who had visited or worked and volunteered at CAT. Francine had known about CAT since she was at university 15 years previously. She saw CAT as well connected to the environmental movement. For her there was also a specific local community which had grown up around CAT and helped sustain it.

Jack pointed out the environmental movement was highly motivating, inspiring commitment. He felt there was a pride in their work compared to working in large industrial concerns: to answer the child's question 'what have you done for the environment today, Daddy' with a clear conscience was important he felt.

A Values Example at CAT

5.1.26 The issue of the GM Company

Some 18 months before the study a debate had emerged about whether to adopt a working partnership with IGOR (Institute of Grassland Research). IGOR, which was

involved in trials of GM seed trials, was to supply seeds for a wetland straw turf roof to the theatre. This would have amounted to a sponsorship link. The links were developed though the Biology Department while others were concerned about such connections.

According to Diedre working with IGOR had appeared in the Overview minutes so it was clear work might be proceeding. Lobbies, which are encouraged at CAT, went to Overview on the issue:

People talked to Biology Team who were promoting the idea. Other people had problems with it and went and talked. And we had an open debate at a separate meeting. In the end we decided not to do it.

Diedre went on to say:

...interestingly that was raised by volunteers and new people at CAT. Volunteers quite often come from a more activist background...a lot of them had been doing tree protests around road building...they bring a lot of that element along...they tend to be young people, pretty committed.

Diedre saw the GM issue as one illustration of the connection of CAT to the environmental movement:

...the GM issue is a good example of where we did have to react...we will tend at a personal/ political level to identify with social movements on the more radical things and try to keep up to date with them.

This incident shows the way the structures can work. Every six months 10 new long term volunteers join CAT. Volunteers are, I suggest, more junior partners in the organisation but they were able to raise this issue. They saw this as an issue of values and credibility within the environmental movement.

The issue was raised as an agenda item and the department was asked to withdraw. Kate pointed out that since then debates about corporate sponsorship had continued. There remained a significant demand from companies to give money. Undertaking consultancies with corporations, however, was seen as less problematic as CAT only provided expertise to improve the environmental performance of an organisation.

In summary volunteers from a wider **environmental movement** brought an awareness and concern into the organisation. They acted as **value carriers** from the movement; they gained support through informal '**people processes**' and were with others able to influence the decision making through the **organisation's structures**.

5.1.27 Preliminary Assessment of Values Reproduction at CAT

The process values at CAT around co-operative working appear more in the foreground than with the other two commercial market cases.

People Processes. CAT, like Coin Street, receives **physical expression as an artifact** in a way that may offer a particular motivation. Being a worker at CAT was more akin to taking a **lifestyle commitment** than holding a professionalised role and I experienced this during the research. **Key value carriers** are spread through the organisation and a range of **informal social processes** operate which have the effect of developing cohesion. The longevity of the organisation means **external advocates** from the wider environmental movement can play a supportive role around the organisation. The selection process offers a **protected entry system** for members combined with monitoring processes once inside.

Structural Issues. The PSM meetings provide forums where values issues can be debated and the Overview group and lobbying procedures offer **access to decision making** and challenge from staff members. The wider organisational structures of A and B shareholders provide respectively, some **constitutional protections** for the organisational values and ways of accessing finance to grow.

Income streams. There will always be contesting on the appropriateness of certain products. I asked a deeper question: does operating in commercial markets *necessarily* lead to a degeneration of social progress values? There is always a contingent possibility and this needs investigating in specific instances. I can find no certainty that values, *for organisations like CAT*, will, in Webb's terms, necessarily degenerate. CAT espouses the notion of earned income to serve the aims rather than being an end.

Social movement. CAT is well located in the **environmental movement** and has trustees, guardian shareholders, and supporters linked into the organisation. Volunteers active in campaigns in their locality have an entry route into the organisation which can provide a ways of refreshing and challenging the organisation. CAT is conscious of its place in the environmental movement and this can provide a supportive harness for values reproduction.

5.2 Infinity Wholefoods

Co-operative

The cliché: Brown Rice and Sandals

Their banner: A workers' co-operative devoted to the cause of organic and natural food and drink.

5.2 Infinity Wholefoods Co-operative: an Overview

5.2.1 Introduction

Located in the North Laine area of Brighton, Infinity Wholefoods shop is one of a network of successful independent wholefood shops in the UK. The 'brown rice' brigade, that teasing term from the popular press used to describe the vague collection of Green eco-activists and alternative vegetarians with a dash of hippy ancestry, conjures up at least two ideas which, despite the cliché, are relevant here. Firstly, the 'brown rice' indicates a concern for 'natural' wholesome food. Secondly, 'brigade' is an indication of an affiliation to a social movement. Both are themes to be considered here and have a relevance to the organisation. Infinity is also a workers' co-operative, which is often seen to fit well to wholefoods. However we need to be aware from the outset that most essentially Infinity is also something else: a successful business operating in a commercial market. In that sense we should note a sense in which Infinity has motivations and affiliations attributed to it which it may or may not advocate, it occupies a position in a sub-culture, and has an identity conferred upon it that may be larger than itself.

The shop and the cafe are the most visible parts of Infinity Wholefoods. The shop, the original hub of the business, was my main focus. The shop now offers far more than 'brown rice and lentils' indeed pulses and grains probably occupy less than one eighth of the shop by shelf space with tinned goods and convenience foods, organic vegetables, dairy foods and breads, organic wines and beers, cosmetics and most recently vitamin supplements.

Bev perhaps gave the most evocative view of Infinity:

...when I walk into Infinity...there is a smell to Infinity too. There's the bread smell. There's even the washing powder smell - that just reminds me of Infinity!

5.2.2 The Story of Infinity

Infinity Wholefoods Co-operative Ltd, or 'Infinity' for short, was originally established as a small business selling wholefoods to the public in Brighton in the late 1970s by three graduates. It became a workers co-operative in 1979 when the founders converted the organisational structure.

5.2.3 Infinity Today

Today the organisation consists of a shop, a bakery, a warehouse and, most —recently in 1998, a cafe. These parts together comprise one business known as Infinity Wholefoods Co-operative Ltd, which is registered as an Industrial and Provident Society. The shop alone has a turnover exceeding £1.4 million per year with the staff numbering over 60, the majority of whom are co-operative members. There are also workers who are not co-operative members and some casual workers. The workers describe themselves on their web site as 'pioneers promoting high quality organic, natural and fair traded goods' stocking over 1500 organic lines (www.infinityfoods.co.uk - 12.6.02). A recent extension (December 2000) has added additional retail capacity.

5.2.4 The Research

I was interested in Infinity for the following reasons. Firstly, I wanted to include a workers' co-operative as part of the research to include a range of social economy organisations. My aim was to find a worker co-op which was well established and was of a reasonable size (say more than 40 staff). As concerns about food (especially food safety, GM foods, organic food) had played a predominant recent role in the national news and it seemed there might be pertinent issues about organisational values. Infinity has been a growing business but the areas it had pioneered (wholefoods, organic vegetables, GM free products) have also entered mainstream shopping. These products are now available in many supermarkets. Were there certain kinds of dilemmas around organisational values present for Infinity in this social climate? Was the mere longevity of this co-op an issue? Had organisational growth itself led to certain conflicts?

I should explain my own relation to Infinity. I had been a customer of the shop for nearly 20 years and at some periods knew friends who had worked in the business. As a vegetarian myself the shop had always been a focal point and had played a role in my own cultural sub-group. The notice board is a favourite place for finding rented accommodation, shared lifts, and information about political, spiritual and musical events. I had considered myself initially 'too close' to Infinity to effectively research it, having had an informal knowledge of the organisation over some period. For this reason pilot work began with

another worker co-op in England. That organisation after showing initial interest, felt that they did not wish to continue involvement in the research, and a replacement of reasonable size and longevity needed to be found. Several attempts to examine other worker co-operatives were unsuccessful. There were few that met my criteria on size or they could not make decisions quickly enough. Pragmatically I decided to contact an acquaintance at Infinity who took my written research request to a co-operative meeting where it was agreed.

One difficulty presented by Infinity as an organisation to research is that it does not talk about itself in any detail. There is no '25 years of Infinity' book. The annual reports with their narration of organisational achievements, so typical in charitable organisations, are not in evidence at Infinity.

I decided to concentrate on one part of the business which is the most labour intensive: the shop and interviewed five people: **Kylie, Ralph, Terry, Bev and Debbie** over a four month period in the spring of 2001. Four of these workers were new to me, the fifth person I knew slightly through meeting in the shop. Issues were followed up with Debbie on three additional occasions as well as later contact with **Mark** at the warehouse, at Debbie's suggestion, to follow up matters relating to GM food. The group of five self-selected to be involved in the research to cover: members who were of newer (2), medium (2) or long standing (1) involvement but also with a variety of roles within the shop.

In addition to the interviews, web searches of co-operative sites were undertaken, and observational techniques were used in the shop and cafe. Two people outside the organisation were contacted on issues concerned with the values example and a report on Infinity undertaken by a co-op member as part of a personnel course was also studied.

Infinity and Organisational Values

5.2.5 Espoused Values at Infinity

Infinity is different to the other organisations examined in one respect: at the time of my interviews it had no written statement of organisational values. One person thought 'something might be written down in a constitution somewhere' and others said it was something that should be done. Ralph responded in this way to my question about this:

... I don't know about that. H might know, some of the older members might know if there is anything written down as a structure of practice at Infinity Foods, but I have never seen anything like that.

Indeed five years earlier, following an interview with an unnamed respondent from Infinity, Environet's entry on the organisation is suggestive of a deliberative desire to avoid

constructing such statements:

The co-operative has resisted a mission statement...They do not wish to sermonise or set themselves up as some sort of ideal for people to pick holes in. They believe their objectives are ultimately good, but do not wish to be thanked for them.

(Environet Interview: October 1996¹)

A painted logo above the shop on the street front proclaims 'Infinity Foods - a worker co-op since 1978' and arguably the term 'wholefoods' written above the shop sends a message concerning what is valued.

Despite the above, six months after completing the interviews the following mission-like statement appeared in the cafe:

Infinity Foods: a worker's co-operative established in 1974 and devoted to the cause of organic and natural food and drink. We believe: that you are what you eat; that good food is the basis of good health, that a diet rich in fresh fruit and vegetables, pulses and grains, not only protects us from illness but also increases our vitality and well being.

...

Infinity foods has supported organic agriculture for nearly thirty years. We believe that organic food grown without the use of chemicals and traded with integrity is the oldest, simplest and most effective way of eating for the health and happiness of individuals, society and the planet.

This statement suggest values and beliefs about the important role 'organic and natural food' plays in our health and well being; that organic agriculture should be supported and its products 'traded with integrity' and that this has a part in the wider health and happiness of 'individuals, society and the planet.' The cafe adds concerns for using environmentally friendly products and recycling. Notions of 'a community cafe' are cited suggesting the important role of customers. Infinity as a worker's co-operative is cited although not developed.

5.2.6 Key Stakeholders' Accounts of Values at Infinity

Ralph indicated new issues such as Genetically Modified (GM) ingredients to which he asserted Infinity's principled opposition. Ralph phrased the values this way:

...first and foremost we are a vegetarian and vegan and organic food shop, so basically there is not a written rule but a rule that everyone adheres to that any product which comes in that hasn't got vegetarian cheese in it or any animal

¹ www.poptel.org.uk/aries/Environet/archive/msg00034.html, searched June 19 2002.

product, gelatin or anything like that, it's a no-no we just don't stock it. Obviously we are all opposed to GM foods so that was a decision we all made together to say 'look we won't stock them.'

There were hints of changes in comments such as these from Bev, a newer member, where she highlighted the way that there were far more convenience foods now being sold in the shop:

I think it was true a number of years ago there were certain products the co-op didn't sell for example...they never sold refined sugar. Now we sell sugar...A lot of the new products coming in are convenience food and a lot of them are organic biscuits and so on which aren't health foods...

Kylie volunteered the kind of **product/ process values** distinction at Infinity towards the end of my first 'orientation' interview. She made a distinction between 'the way we treat ourselves' and the 'what we sell.' Kylie was proud of the ethical nature of Infinity's work:

...something I haven't been able to touch on in this discussion...is the way we treat ourselves. The other is the 'what we sell.' What we sell is quite easy to talk about. The how we treat ourselves is more difficult. I have always been proud to work for Infinity because I feel it is ethical, it is doing something I believe in and I have a lot of responsibility and I can feel a sense of achievement in what I do...

I shall return to process values around worker treatment later. There was support for the dual nature of values by Terry who saw the **process values** of co-operative working and the **product values** of quality goods as both of high importance:

We exist..to promote definitely a worker's co-op, definitely to provide a good range and a good working environment, looking after the staff...

Debbie who had been at Infinity since the 1980s recalls the kind of deep interest in the issues of co-operatives which was evidenced at a Christmas party from the early years:

I remember years ago...we had a Christmas dinner and we finished off by watching a video of the Mondragon co-ops. I think we probably wouldn't want to do that now!

For many of the workers both process and product values were important. Terry's own personal motivations for, and involvement in, co-operative activity was combined

with a commitment to vegetarian and organic food. He had wanted to work for a co-operative, having already set up a housing co-op and had been a vegetarian for a long time.

Debbie felt Infinity was now catering for a more mainstream customer. She recalled the early days when people worked for free, she speculated it may have been easier then because of welfare benefits. The connection to those early days was still important for Debbie:

...Infinity was set up when it was so far from the mainstream. I feel good about that. People were standing up for deeply held principles. Saying that modern commercial farming practices were not where we should be taking ourselves. People worked really hard for Infinity - they definitely weren't in it for the money.. I think that is impressive and it is great to be part of something that started for the very best of reasons....

Bev, herself a newer member had heard stories of the 'early days.' Recently she had heard stories of how, many years previously during a very hot summer, members had decided to take a two hour lunch break to go swimming:

Bev: I think we have lost that to some extent in the shop because we have got busier and busier.

She felt that was something that would not happen now and this is suggestive of a greater degree of professionalism in the organisation.

5.2.7 Types of Values at Infinity

The official statement is helpful in setting out some of the range of values at Infinity. Many of these are **product values** (providing organic wholefoods), although some are **process values** (support for trading with integrity) and both can be construed as **social progress values** around wanting to improve health and justice. **Co-operative values** are not specifically described in the **process values** but taken as a matter of course ('Infinity is a worker co-operative').

There is not a necessary connection between the vegetarian wholefood values and the co-operative values. There is often a connection in the public's mind. The Environet interview sums it up in this way:

It was not seen as being necessarily the case that participative enterprises are more suitable for ecological enterprises, but this is commonly the public perception and Infinity benefits from that.

Nevertheless the link is not as arbitrary as this might appear. Embedded within the environmental movement have been notions of participation and localised democracy as playing a part in sustainable development as enshrined, for example, in the document of the UN Earth Summit (1992) where at least two of the 27 principles stress the importance 'participation of all concerned citizens' (principle 10) and 'effective participation' of 'local communities' in environmental development (principle 22).

Factors Affecting Values at Infinity

5.2.8 People Processes and Value Carriers

One way that the co-operative values and the product values are maintained is through more experienced people, to whom there is clearly some deferment. Terry noted that some workers had been in the co-op for many years and newer people felt they had relatively little experience to contribute initially:

It is totally different work environment to what I am used to...[after] I finished university...[I] had Saturday jobs then. It is really different not to have a boss and a hierarchy. There is a hierarchy actually - there are people who seem more like a boss - but...you know you have a say.

I asked Bev about the hierarchy, who were the people with more influence? Bev saw it like this:

Generally those who have been there longer, there is also a hierarchy in each department...There is definitely a hierarchy of who has been there longer but again, that is because they have more knowledge...

This is suggestive to me of the more experienced, longer term people being relied upon to be key decision makers and possibly key value carriers within the organisation. There is relatively little training. Staff meetings are held immediately after working hours when workers are tired. There is no tradition of away days, and there seemed to be few social events although there were attempts to begin such activities. Infinity seems to rely on a custom and practice approach to maintaining co-operative values and accepts the need for a slow acculturation process of learning whereby the experienced workers will show the way.

² www.poptel.org.uk/aries/Environet/archive/msg00034.html, searched June 19 2002.

To pursue this I had asked Kylie, who had an interest in personnel issues, how new people come to understand the Infinity approach. Do they join 'ready-made' as Infinity people. If not how do they become 'Infinityised'? Kylie was unsure:

That's a very interesting question! I don't know! But when people come you can very soon tell if they are going to be good or not. I think people are generally very concerned about these issues.

This suggested to me that some of the approach is tacit. It is hard to delineate what an 'infinity person' would be but you can tell when you come across one - or at least you think you can. There is another clue contained here - that people are 'very concerned' about the issues, so we have a sense then of at least 'partially formed' Infinity people will arrive with some of the expected attitudes. They may be partly absorbed in a wider movement around food issues. This relates to the impact of social movements which is discussed shortly. Kylie emphasised the difficulty of pinpointing these 'ready made' attributes. She wondered if they could be codified or checked. One required feature was a commitment and responsibility to the co-operative, a sense of joint ownership of the business and the ideas behind it:

...I think it is about interest in the business and then an interest in what we are about. We haven't got anything written down. We have talked about writing it down, and having a welcome pack, ...[that] says all these kinds of things, issues, such as we're into stocking fair trade products and organic...it is about someone's level of enthusiasm and working together as a team and someone who feels that this business is our business. I think that is an enormously big thing for people to grasp.

So far the notion of value carriers has been implicit in this discussion so I want to end this section with three insights from staff about this concept. Debbie pointed out that different people acted as advocates on different values. Secondly, Mark had been a strong advocate on GM issues and had insisted the organisation take a boycotting stance rather simply fair labelling. Thirdly a member, now left, had been a fierce opponent of vitamin supplements being stocked and had remained firm on this issue until her departure.

5.2.9 External Advocates

I asked Debbie in a follow-up interview about external advocates. Were there people who might rally to Infinity's support in the event of a crisis, people who were not necessarily now formally involved in the organisation but still supported its aims? Alternatively, was Infinity now such an established and professional business that such

persons would not be available? Debbie reported that customers had played such roles in the past. She recalled an incident from 15 years ago when a cafe was bought. Friends of Infinity, including some staff, customers and early founders, lent the organisation money. Six people gave thousands of pounds. Debbie described them as 'old time friends' of Infinity. There was a strong bond between customer and members according to Debbie:

Of course in the old days some customers got invited to the Christmas parties - there were some wild ones!

Today she felt such 'old time friends' would not provide financial support but might help in other ways. A pertinent issue was the redevelopment of the adjacent site where she felt, if necessary, Infinity could easily get a petition and newspaper publicity. Some of that strong connection between customers and members was still present and she felt some customers do 'love' the shop, treating it 'like hallowed ground.'

5.2.10 Informal Processes

There were a great many informal processes at Infinity. Recruitment and induction had, until recently, been informal. There was also evidence of a strong informal network operating with a significant influence on decision making. Values and values maintenance is implicated in all of these.

Terry pointed out recruitment from friends and customers had been the practice. This protected entry had enabled the co-op to recruit from a pool of people 'on message.' The phenomenon of recruitment through affiliations is well documented as are the advantages of this strategy (Stryjan 1989:91). It has the obvious disadvantage that it may be excluding and discriminatory for those outside an inner circle and, for example, few Black and Asian staff work at Infinity as several staff, such as Terry, acknowledged:

Regular customers who come in the shop ask for work - or people who leave to go to college and friends of their's come in - its much more informal like that...some people are just such regular customers...

This kind of recruitment can lead to other patterns, such as the importation of ready made friendship circles, with internal cliques whose members support each other in internal decision making rather like block votes at conferences. There was some evidence of this tendency at Infinity. This could make disciplinary matters difficult as the support or opposition from a particular faction could add complexities to already difficult decisions. Indeed there was some descriptions of a performance issue with a member which had a

partial connection with clique operation.

The issue of cliques for co-ops can be problematic and can affect the ability to remain close to values. It is one danger of recruitment by informal processes, but it is also a response to the crucial need for co-ops to acquire members who share the commitments of the organisation. A housing co-op member I spoke to during a Mutual Aid conference in Brighton in February 2002 graphically described that difficulty in the different arena of mutual housing. People entered the co-op because they were desperate for accommodation but had little interest in the co-op³. Without a screening process for new members the organisation had to 'grow' co-operative members once they had entered - with generally poor results. Many people played little role in the running of the co-op, engaged in behaviour that was detrimental to other residents, and ran up rent arrears. Here the importance of membership, as stressed by (Stryjan 1989:35), had been neglected. Another co-operative member I spoke to at the same event described another tendency that had emerged from a protected entry system. Here the roles were codified by describing people as 'in' or 'out' of a particular clique.

I want to return now to some of the informal interactions between people. With the induction of new people the importance of sharing between new and established persons was stressed. Bev was relatively new when she had found herself using informal ways to understand the organisation:

I got on the 6 month trial period [towards becoming a member]...I didn't know anything about co-ops at that stage. I kept asking people what it would mean to be a member and they just said 'oh you come to meetings and you get paid more!'

How did she get the sense of what the organisation believed in? I was seeing organisational values as embedded in the organisational culture and in the specific actions involved within tasks. Bev felt she learnt through the informal processes:

...through talking to everyone. And it took a long time. For example, what your role is as a member - I never really got it until I went to the meetings...you tend to be quite quiet at the first meetings - I wasn't sure it meant any difference me being there...When I started I was shown around the shop, had half an hour on the till and that was it...Unfortunately the more competent you appear the less training you get...we have to do quite a lot of ordering on Saturday and Wednesday..I was left to do it...and it was completely overwhelming...I can't see if anyone else came along they would get any better training. I don't think we are learning.

Terry who was also relatively new had had similar experiences on starting:

³ I am grateful to Tony Cook at Mutual Aid, Sussex, for this incident, although the interpretation is my own.

It took quite a long while... When you start you don't get chaperoned. It is very much you go in and find things out yourself...it is very much through talking to people, rather than any special procedure...If I did ask anyone they were always more than willing to help but that role doesn't really exist. Debbie performs that role but it is not formalised...she is that kind of person.

Terry felt learning about Infinity was an incremental process involving lots of talking to people over a long period of time:

...it was just talking to people and getting the background...I can't think of any of those occasions where a great leap was made...something you wouldn't really notice, just conversations and slowly things would seep in.

These are indications here of some of the problem areas around maintaining co-operative values and possibly product values. However, it seemed to me that product values could be picked up either by information or practice but how were co-operative principles being maintained and strengthened?

I asked if there had been critical decisions on issues about fundamental values issues at Infinity. My impression were that meetings were rarely contentious. Where was the argument and debate happening? Terry pointed to the power of the informal process:

You are right - that's indicative of how most decisions are reached. Things don't come down to meetings - if you get a bunch of people together every day for 8 hours they are going to talk ...anything contentious that comes up people talk about, so it rarely comes down to a crunch meeting, it is happening more subtly.

Bev made a similar point in that after the formal meetings:

...you end up talking over the next few days, talking in small groups about what has been discussed and what was said because it brings up stuff.

She confessed to feeling sometimes very quiet and unable to speak at meetings. I had wondered about the informal discussions. Were they long after-work discussions or many short episodic comments? Terry described them as episodic discussions which shaped a 'common feel' prior to meetings:

... all the time it is happening, most often something will come up at a meeting and someone will voice something and then in between meetings that is when all the work is done, then informally people talking about...and it is more like the meeting

formalises decisions that have already been made...some kind of - common feel is coming through by the time of the meeting...I can't remember any big fights at meetings.

These micro-processes are of interest in themselves. Elsewhere in commercial settings these processes would be described as part of an informal network, one of the 'communities of practice' (Wenger 1998). Many decisions at Infinity seemed to be taken outside of the official structures. This may have been either because those structures were not efficient at achieving quality decisions, or in order to gain support in advance for set positions, or possibly as a strategy for avoiding conflict.

In an organisation composed of members the notion of an informal alternative organisation needs to be considered. At CAT, in the previous case study considered, the 'lobbies' are actively encouraged and have been institutionalised as part of the structure. At Infinity such informal processes may encourage better decision making as workers discuss issues during the day. The questions here are whether everyone has equal access to such processes and whether they should be rationalised as part of the organisational structure.

5.2.11 Organisational Structure

For the first part of this section I draw on some of the results of a study by a member who, concurrently with my study, was undertaking her own project on meetings at Infinity as part of a personnel course. For membership a prospective co-op member must successfully complete a probationary period and other members need to vote by a 75% majority to confer membership, and the person must buy a £1 share. They then gain a right to an equal say in the running of the business (Townsend-Coles 2000:5).

The same report identified at least ten types of meetings at Infinity which included an Annual General Meeting, North Laine meetings, Finance Team, and Personnel Meetings. There are 25 members on the retail side who came to the North Laine meetings, which are compulsory, and these are held 'when there are felt to be sufficient matters to discuss', usually once a month (Townsend-Coles 2001:7).

The meetings take place out of normal hours 'without it impinging on the day to day running of the business' and people arrive tired after work. Attendance at the meeting is however paid for. The report noted that no formal review of meetings at Infinity had happened for eight years and asserted that:

Wider issues such as how to encourage involvement especially amongst new members, how to ensure equal participation amongst all members, and how to deal with disagreements constructively are rarely if ever, dealt with.

The report described a level of dissatisfaction with the organisation of meetings - the process around co-operative values seem poorly attended to. Some of the issues included: people remaining silent when they had wished to contribute, people needing more trust and confidence before feeling able to speak and feel listened to. Five people reported they had voted with the majority on some occasion when they disagreed or felt there should be further discussion. Although the meetings are an essential part of the running of the co-op 'they are the one aspect of working at Infinity that seem to be liked least of all by most people if not everyone...they are rarely anticipated with any enthusiasm, and afterwards, some extremely negative comments have been made' (Townsend-Coles 2001:26).

I want to contrast the way organisational structures and processes are deployed with differential intensity to the product and the process values. My conclusion here will be that product values occupy a primary place at Infinity and process values are accorded a lower priority. On the whole there seemed to be a pride in the product values Infinity upholds. Co-operative working and structures to support this are relatively undeveloped and little 'slack' time is devoted to building or enhancing them. Several workers were dissatisfied at the current processes and felt a desire to become more structured.

High priority is given to product values where staff may go to great lengths to check products and there are a number of organisational processes in place. As Ralph says:

I have seen some products that have 'organic' written on them but when you look round you think 'well who certified this, where is it coming from?' So you have to have a criteria about making sure it is organic...Recently I have been meeting the people behind the companies that supply us - if you can do that you can get an idea of what the company is like, what the people are like, you can get to see if they cut corners, but luckily if you have Soil Association governing bodies... they are all very good and very thorough...some people at the warehouse have [also] been to see a few companies in Belgium...looked at their production.

However, on process values the story seemed less convincing. Challenging colleagues was harder at a one-to-one level and organisational processes had not developed apace. Ralph recognised this dilemma:

It does seem more in a co-op that people don't want to tell each other what to do. It is a bit difficult to do...Sometimes it gets like 'oh I can't tell them because they won't like me.'

Kylie, for example, saw individual challenges as being problematic but saw development of organisational structures as important as Infinity had expanded:

I'm unhappy about lack of structures...I think there is a great unwieldy nature to co-operatives. I can't make any major decisions...Say it is a personnel matter - I have to go to a meeting - it then has to go to another meeting...and then, if there isn't enough information or people want more time, it will have to go back to another meeting - it could take 6 weeks.

This slowness of decision making is sometimes cited as an advantage of co-operative structures because it could lead to better quality decisions and slow down abrupt changes in direction against values. Debbie was skeptical. Some major decisions were agreed without adequate consideration while small decisions took up considerable time. She felt there was still a lack of structures in recruitment processes:

Debbie: We took on people without any of us doing any training courses. We have evolved a reasonable way of taking on people, realising you have to go through the process in a fairly fair and formal way...

One member felt almost despairing about the situation (name withheld):

...you lose focus on whether there is actually a future, because I am not feeling confident in the decision making I think, where is the future? I can work in the present - and on everyday things, but you need to be able to see further than that.

Another felt there was a lack of a chance to review and decide (name withheld):

We are so busy that no-one just steps back and looks at things. A very fine example was this recruitment issue - we actually need to look at how we are going to do that in the future...People do need office time.

Nevertheless the current situation was welcomed as regards levels of personal freedom:

Ralph: ...because there is no management structure where people get told what to do, people can take breaks when they want, stupid stuff like that...You can structure your day how you want.

Understanding co-operative structures was not easy for new staff. Kylie admits in her early years at Infinity she tended to see a more experienced member as the boss. She felt that part timers and casuals did not gain a sense of ownership of the business.

Nevertheless there is some hint of certain people playing significant leadership roles; interestingly H's name came up several times. I have illustrated that product and process values have not developed evenly. The result is that process values around co-operative working are not well nurtured.

5.2.12 Income Streams

Infinity is located in a thriving market with record sales in March 2001. It is possible that this very success could also become a threat as other competitors enter what is now becoming a mainstream market. Supermarkets can beat Infinity on price and there is a threat of a chain of organics supermarkets potentially opening a new development nearby. Recent expansion resulting in increased rent may provide additional market pressures. The price of local accommodation was cited as problematic for a co-operative that still pays marginal wages compared to the mainstream sector. Returning to the Environet interview they did not consider 'public support programmes are needed to achieve any particular ecological goals' which emphasises a market approach for their product values in the environmental field. My key question here was how does the market affect Infinity's ability to stay close to its values?

Evidence of market support for Infinity's product values was clearly expressed: Bev thought recent 'food scares' had been helpful to Infinity:

..all of that has made us busier, the organics and the anti-GM food...that was the start of the foot and mouth epidemic so perhaps people were perhaps thinking about that... everything is going in our favour at the moment...A couple of year ago it was 20% every year increase.

However the success had led to competitors appearing. Bev was aware that that supermarkets were 'catching up' with the organic food retailers however Ralph still felt the market was big enough to sustain different outlets at present. If the other suppliers were not there Infinity would not, he felt, be able to cope with the demand and Ralph held that it was good more organic food was being sold wherever this was:

We can't match certain supermarkets on prices, it is impossible, because we can't at the warehouse buy at that price...For a while people used to say Infinity is really expensive, but gradually less and less people say that because we are not that expensive.

Bev felt out-of-town shopping had benefited Infinity - it is now one of the few stores operating in town selling food and especially fruit and vegetables. That area of the

business she reports is still expanding.

This illustrates that the market has not necessarily had a constraining effect on product values. Infinity has kept to its values of vegetarian food and organic products. One effect of the market could be a tendency to move into convenience foods. As a pioneer Infinity has a trusted brand. The organisation has taken advantage of these opportunities by expanding but workers were keen that Infinity should not turn into a supermarket. Apart from the buoyant market there is an additional external support for Infinity: the effect of social movements which on product values may be exerting an important effect.

5.2.13 Social Movements

Infinity is linked to several social movements. Firstly, and most broadly there is a link to environmental movements. Infinity has taken a policy decision against GM products, currently a strong environmental concern. Symbolically, a connection to a wider environment is made by a near metre high poster in the shop window depicting the earth with the legend 'for your health and the health of the planet.' Secondly, there is the allegiance to the wholefood/vegetarian movement. Thirdly, there is an affiliation to a mind-body/health tendency (Infinity established the adjacent Natural Health Centre which holds yoga and tai chi classes). Fourthly, Infinity is part of the wider co-operative movement and is affiliated to the Co-operative Union. Fifthly, there are associations to movements around fair and ethical trade. Sixthly, there is a link to locality and community. This can be seen through consistent support through placing adverts or giving donations to community organisations, and via taking people with learning disability on short placements in the shop.

Despite these connections workers concede that Infinity is not necessarily very active in networks in the town, either as an organisation or through individuals. One worker felt Infinity was not sufficiently involved, for example, with a grouping of co-operatives in the town, or even with groupings such as local trading associations. Individuals are not highly involved in social and political movements. Terry, a relatively new and younger member, found this surprising.

There are not a lot of people who are active...I thought people would be a lot more motivated by campaign groups and involved in all kinds of things - it's not really the case - everyone works very hard and there's not really the time...but I did think people would be more involved.

What would influence policies or beliefs about Infinity products? Would other organisations in the field or social movements influence stances toward products? If a large

wholefood co-op like SUMA, or say Greenpeace, changed its position on GM foods would this shift Infinity's position? Terry thought this would have some influence:

It wouldn't be as simple as 'if SUMA do it', it would be OK. I don't think that would happen but it couldn't but help make people think about it and that would contribute to the discussion...

Mark at the warehouse had learnt of GM issues five years earlier through his personal membership of Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth. The issues was 'crucial' for Mark as he was responsible for buying stock and needed criteria to work from. He put the issue on the agenda formally. Debates happened at the warehouse and discussions continued between him and Infinity's wholesale suppliers and customers. Within Infinity not everyone had understood the issues and it needed explaining but he felt no-one had been in favour of GM. There was not a lot of debate when the issue was discussed formally and Infinity decided on a boycott at both shop and warehouse. Since that time customer reaction had been very positive as had 'the trade' - wholefood shops who purchase from Infinity. Overall, Mark felt, this stance had benefited Infinity from a commercial perspective:

We didn't think people would want to produce these sorts of food. It was a shock. None of us here are scientists...our initial view was that we didn't want these foods...information came into Infinity from various sources, newspapers, environmental groups, an Indian organisation sent out lots of information...The strongest issue was on choice: the customer hasn't asked for these products. Nearly everyone felt it was an important issue. It was also useful too as a trading and marketing tool. It reinforced our commitment to organic food.

Workers within the organisation are often committed strongly to the values at a personal level which has a link to social movements. Ralph, for example, brought his values around vegetarian food into the organisation with him. He had been a vegetarian although he had not had experience in food retailing. The shop's relation of authenticity to the customer provides a coincidence of social movement and market factors:

If...you lose the trust of your customers then you have had it...it all works on a feedback basis from the customers.

'Fussy customers' keep the organisation alert according to Ralph, Bev and Debbie. Ralph suggested it was customers and staff that kept Infinity as it was. Kylie thought that customers trusted Infinity and knew it took a stand on social issues (eg GM).Terry

emphasised how Infinity was perceived as authentic:

I think people attribute an authenticity to what we do...the shop has been here nearly 30 years - because of that people know we stand for what we sell, there's a trust.

Infinity's location in relation to social movements draws in two separate related strands of management thinking. This has links to Pestoff's (2001) theoretical work on the ways certain not-for-profit organisations can be seen as organisations embodying a movement or social issue that pre-exists them. Secondly it relates to the increasing interest in the space between organisations. Wenger's (1998) notion of communities of practice in the sense of practitioners who work across organisational boundaries but share interests or values is one example here.

A Values Example at Infinity

5.2.14 Vitamin Supplements

One example around product values was the decision to change the long held policy on not selling vitamin supplements. This is an example of the application of a value (around wholefoods and healthy eating) being applied and transformed in a changing context. There had always been significant customer demand for food supplements but this had been increasing. The argument had been that supplements were unnecessary with a correct wholefood diet. As Kylie pointed out 'the whole ethos' had been that all vitamins and nutrients can be obtained through a healthy diet. Kylie described the background to the original policy as being a commitment to wholefoods:

We had a meeting last week where we decided in line with the new shop expansion that we would start stocking a small range of vitamins that were made by an ethical company. This is quite ground breaking because the whole ethos of Infinity is - although it isn't written down...we believe that you can have all the vitamins and nutrients you need through a good balanced healthy diet.

However, selling supplements is lucrative, offering a high rate of return for a relatively small space on the shelves.

At Infinity a key member became most vocally associated with maintaining the 'no vitamins' line. When this member left, and following some research on an ethical producer of vitamins, the decision was changed to stock a small range of these products. In this instance there was a combination of factors at work: customer demand, a recognition of a change in social attitudes to such vitamins, the departure of a key advocate of the old

policy, the locating of an acceptable producer. Increased income may have played a role.

When asked about the challenges to values, Ralph cited the same example:

[It] has been on the agenda for a number of years...Recently at a meeting it came ...people have been opposed to stocking supplements and vitamins because that is not really the way Infinity is - we sell foods not supplements...there is a lot of money made in the supplements business and a lot of it is just rubbish.

On this point Bev reiterated the concerns made by Kylie and she too saw it as representing a big shift. She compared Infinity to the situation in health food shops which, Bev felt, resembled chemists, with little food stuffs available:

I went to a Holland and Barret...it was like a chemist - they have hardly any food stuffs at all - it's not right.

What then hastened the change in policy? Kylie outlined two reasons for the change: stress of modern living, these might be described in social changes, and customer demand.

.We are constantly turning customers away - we have ended up saying we will stock a small range of vitamins that are in this food state...and also because it is made by an ethical company.

The process was elaborated by Ralph:

...it came up in a meeting because T who is our cosmetics and non-food buyer, and B who does that job with her, thought it might be an idea to stock a small range because we get asked all the time...

The mitigating circumstances were seen to be that the produce was being made by an ethical company, which fitted other Infinity values, that the company donated a proportion of its profits to charity, and had recyclable bottles. Terry and Ralph made the point in similar ways:

Terry: They are a very ethical company, they give 50% of their profits to charity, they are all into recycling, so we thought we will do it with them, rather than getting our vitamins from someone like Smith-Beecham.

Ralph: Veridian who are very good - they donate a lot of their money to charity, I think at least half their profits, and they are very environmentally friendly.

On the other hand it was also pointed out that the shop expansion meant there was a new opportunity to expand the lines and another member pointed out economic factors for members. Debbie phrased it this way pointing to some workers who were keen for greater sales, she also implied high living costs locally might play a part:

There are some people who want us to be profitable and to increase our wages and bonuses. There are different factions. It hasn't for me reached an unacceptable level - make money at all costs...It is expensive living in Brighton now.

I was interested in what people felt had blocked the change in the past and why was it different now? Kylie pointed out there had been opposition before:

In the past we have brought this issue about stocking vitamins to meetings and it has been thrown out completely

Debbie saw it as a shift in the customer base and hinted that both customers and staff were close in the past:

Our customers have changed...In the early days perhaps customers and workers kept up with each other - people used to boil up their tea in the staff room...And maybe the type of person working here has changed because the whole thing has opened out more.

How had the decision come about? The decision seems to have been relatively smooth after many years of debate. Ralph described it as a decision taken following uncontroversial consultation with the warehouse. He saw it as a compromise but acceptable to do because the company was ethical:

We only agreed to stock a small range, about 8 items. So in that way we compromised that yes we can do it...we have compromised with a good company and a small range.

Some people identified the decision as related to a particular person who had now left. Ralph, for example, saw it as one key person who was keen on this issue:

There was only one person - she has left now - who was really opposed to the idea completely, so for a quiet life it was just for ages, we won't do that because we will upset a particular person. But she has left now and more and more people have come round...

I wanted to understand a little more about whether there had been a change in attitude on the consumption of food supplements and contacted a colleague in middle years who had undertaken work on ethical consumers and who was also a vegetarian. He identified himself as a member of the 'old school':

My personal reaction is that I try to avoid eating things that I can't reasonably recognise as a vegetable food shape so no vitamin supplements. I guess I'm of the 'old school' on that one.

(Dr. Terry Newholm, UMIST, 21.6.02)

Government statistical surveys such as Social Trends (2002) and The National Food Survey (2001) do not list consumption or purchase of food supplements. However the Dietary and Nutritional Survey of British Adults, assembled by MAFF (1990), found 17% of women and 9% of men used food supplements a decade ago. This survey has since been discontinued so comparative details for the last 10 years are hard to find. The UK Vegetarian Society information office reported Mintel's 1999 British Lifestyles Survey which showed a 52% rise in sales of vitamin supplements over the ten year period to 1998. I asked him whether vitamin or food supplements are more acceptable to vegetarians now than 10 years ago and are whole food shops tending to stock them more? He said 'yes' on both counts, although he referred to 'health food stores' and Infinity distinguishes itself as a wholefood shop. He indicated competitive reasons within the vegetarian market as to why such stores were increasingly stocking such items:

More vegetarian food lines are now available in supermarkets so the Health Food Store owner needs to look at more profitable lines which are not so widely available - such as specialist supplements...a number of 'whole food vegetarians' were against supplements twenty years ago, the newer vegetarian seems to embrace the idea of supplements...most members calling us with nutritional queries seem to be already taking at least some supplements.

Chris Olivant (Information and Customer Services Manager The Vegetarian Society of the United Kingdom by email 21.6.02).

A number of factors seem to have had an effect on the vitamins' issue. Firstly, the departure of a key value carrier on the issue. Secondly, there was some external market pressure (from companies) and suggestions that some members within Infinity wanted a more successful business. Thirdly, there was some customer pressure. Fourthly, the wider ethos and acceptability of vitamin or food supplements within the vegetarian movement seems to have shifted, there appears to be no strong social movement on this issue. This

can be contrasted with the GM issue where there was a strong lobby from value carriers inside the organisation, an associated movement within the environmental and organic food lobbies to support an opposition to these foods, and arguably a market advantage to preserving trust with niche customers who may have had strong views on the issue.

5.2.15 A Preliminary Assessment on Values Reproduction at Infinity

In looking first at **people processes**, most people acquired an understanding of Infinity's beliefs by **informal processes**, by talking informally to work colleagues in the shop through episodic contact. In some cases the knowledge of values was **tacit**, people were expected to know or pick up the values. Rationalised written statements appeared only recently. There was a high **personal motivation** and congruence of staff toward the **product values** of organic vegetarian wholefoods. **Value carriers** played an important role in sustaining values on issues of food supplements and GM foods. A more latent factor may be the position of **external advocates** who exist around the organisation and may be called upon in a crisis situations. There was some evidence of a move to **professionalisation** with the increasing size of the business, particularly in respect of recruitment. New workers are recruited into the organisation on the basis of sharing values around vegetarian or organic food, retail experience, alternative lifestyles or co-operative working. Customers and friends provide a potential pool of new members.

Despite the range of meetings and attempts to develop systematic processes, most notably on recruitment, structures were still, overall, weak with decisions being shaped more through informal processes. There was a higher regard for Infinity's **product values** than the **process values** around co-operative working. **Formal organisational links** to other related movements also seemed scarce.

Intelligence seemed to enter the organisation through a strong connection to **social movements**, particularly on food, vegetarianism, environmental concerns, ethical trading and the **personal commitment** of members to given values connected to those issue.

Infinity is operating in commercial **markets** which exert pressures, but these are not necessarily uni-directional. On food supplements there was some commercial imperatives to shift the values. On GM foods it is fair to conclude that the niche market supports Infinity on its stance and so adds to the organisation's credibility and market success: values coincide with good marketing strategy.

5.3 Coin Street Community Builders

The cliché: Local Campaign turns Property Developer for the poor

Their banner: There is another way..for the people to have control, to lead development, to own the development

5.3 Coin Street Community Builders: an Overview

5.3.1 Introduction to Coin Street

Coin Street is perhaps the most complicated of the case studies to describe because of its many interlocking parts and hazy organisational boundaries. However these are some of the points which make it illuminating as a case study on values reproduction. Coin Street can be viewed as a series of groups, organisations, and people which have some common purposes knitted loosely together with a strong central core of people. One way to describe Coin Street is through the founding story which plays an important part in the life of the organisation today. Several people told the story which felt like a convenient container for the values and beliefs of the organisations. Schein (1986) contends that myths contain important clues as to the values and assumptions of the members of the organisation. Schwabenland's (2001) research on founding stories in voluntary organisations likens them to creation myths containing evidence of 'taken-for-granted deep level assumptions about the social world.' The long running slogan, and public banner outside Coin Street, 'There is Another Way', contains resonances of a world view based not on a for-profit development and with allusions to local community control.

5.3.2 The Story of Coin Street

The Coin Street Action Group started as a community campaign in 1977, and fought for seven years to prevent a large scale office development on the south bank of the River Thames by the National Theatre. It opposed the developers through two planning inquiries. Firstly, in 1979 it fought a scheme which was finally rejected by the then environment secretary, Michael Heseltine, who argued against any single use scheme. Secondly in 1983 the Group put its own proposals to the next inquiry. The campaign was composed of activists, including tenants and squatters, from the area 'buttressed by the strong organising experience of dockers and other trade unionists' (Jeffrey:1997:32). In the developers' second proposal was a Richard Rogers' award winning architectural plan for a wall of buildings with a million square feet of office and luxury flats, described by local people as 'a New Berlin Wall' excluding them from the 'bright lights of the West End'

Jeffrey:1997:32). The Action Group's proposal was for social housing, a new park, a riverside walkway, managed workshops, shops and leisure facilities. After the second public inquiry permission was granted for either the office plan or the Action Groups' ideas. After 1981 the Greater London Council (GLC) supported the community scheme in preference to the office plan and zoned the area for housing. This eventually led, in 1984, to the developers selling their half of the site to the GLC who held the other half of the land (Coin Street 1998?:9). The whole 13 acre site was then sold to a not-for-profit company established for this purpose, Coin Street Community Builders, who bought it with a £1m loan from the Greater London Enterprise Board. Covenants on the land specified that it should be for a mixed use development under community control.

Coin Street Community Builders was born and, inheriting the Action Group's demands, set about providing the needs articulated during the campaign. Car parking on the site was used to generate an income to service the loan and pay for the incipient development organisation. However within four years the first co-operative housing units had been built and a new park and river walk opened (Pearce 1993:4). A celebrated banner, which hung on public view on the site proclaimed some of the aspiration, mission and values of the organisation: 'There is another way. That way is for the people to have control, to lead development, to own the development' (Pearce:1996:154).

5.3.3 Coin Street Today

Today in addition to providing over 160 homes, Coin Street is responsible for the Bernie Spain Gardens, the mix of shops and cafes on the temporary site of Gabriel's Wharf, craft and design workshop with museum, exhibition space and restaurant in the refurbished OXO tower development, as well as festivals and social activities. The original 13 acre site is divided into different plots, most of which, with the completion of the Iroko housing have now been developed¹. Two of the last major parts to be developed are the Site A and the adjacent community facility Hothouse.

Coin Street represents a celebrated case. Detractors from the community side can be found who claim more housing might have been built quicker². My own informant from the regeneration field, Jan, raised a concern about the way outside consultants and groups were brought in to do community consultation. However, Coin Street is generally lauded in texts as a successful example of what John Pearce (1993:3) described as a 'community enterprise' or development trust. It fits most of the schema of the nine criteria for a social enterprise (Defourny and Borzaga: 2001).

The work straddles a conceptual line across Friendly Societies, with co-operatives,

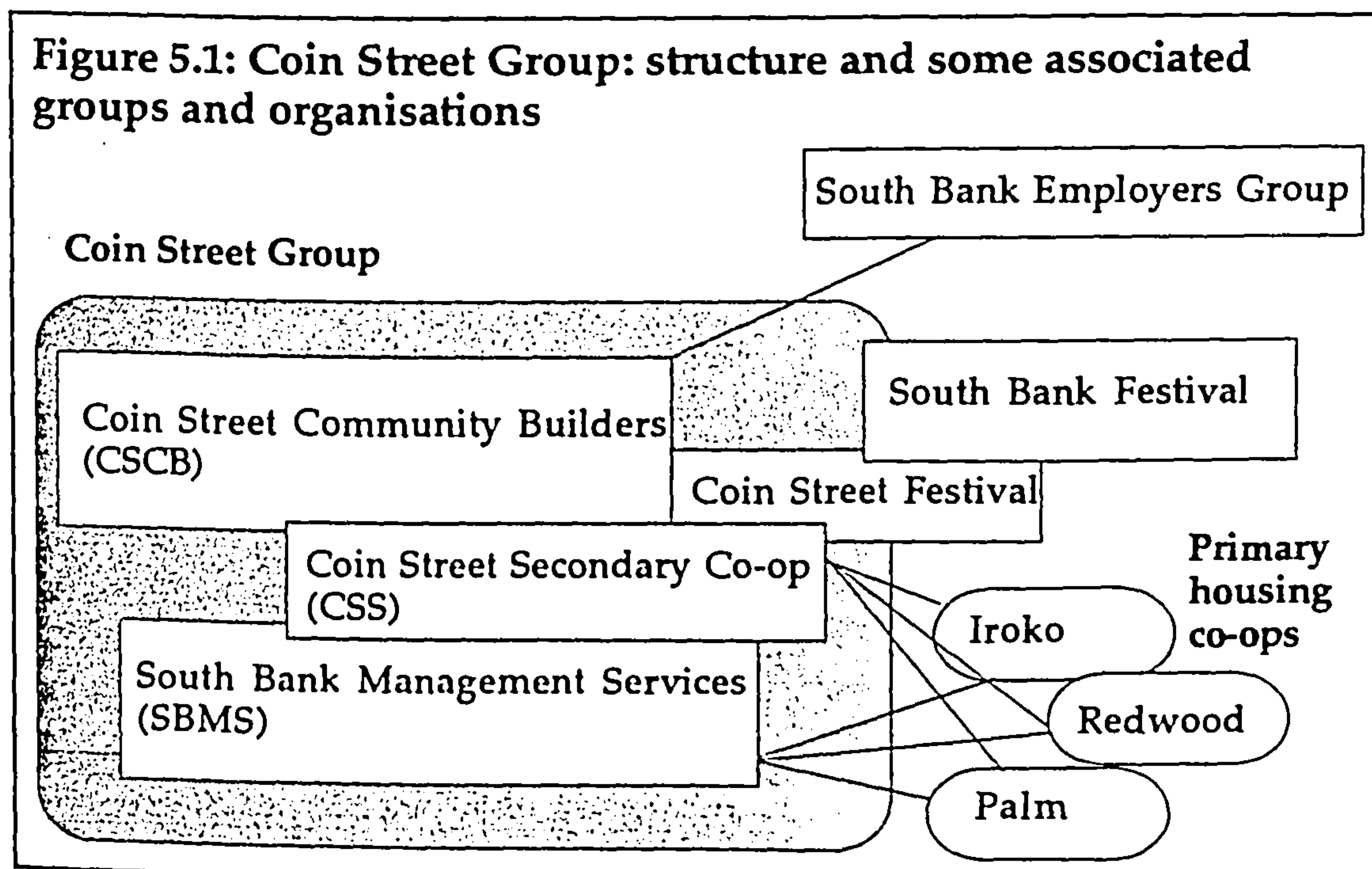
¹ See 'Heart of Gold' Glancey, J. Guardian Supplement 8.4.02

² Jeffrey, N New Statesman 20.6.1997

and charitable activity. This complexity is reflected in the mix of institutional forms. Overall the core organisations and groups are called the **Coin Street Group**. These include a not-for-profit company (**Coin Street Community Builders**), a housing association registered as a Friendly Society (**Coin Street Secondary Co-op**). Relatively more independent are the housing co-operatives who manage their own rents and maintenance (**Palm, Redwood and Iroko primary housing co-operatives**). There is a company that undertakes maintenance work on the parks and public areas and offers management services to the co-ops if they wish to purchase that (**South Bank Management Services**). In addition there are a range of charitable organisations (such as the annual **Coin Street Festival**). The group was a founding member of other independent organisations, like the **South Bank Employers Group**, which supports infrastructure projects on the river bank and in the neighbouring area.

When I use the term 'Coin Street' I refer to the whole family of organisations. The more restricted term the **Coin Street Group** will be used to refer to Coin Street Community Builders (the development arm), South Bank Management Services (undertaking day to day management), Coin Street Secondary (the housing association) and the Coin Street Festival. The study takes the Coin Street Group as the focus but the whole entity is also necessarily discussed.

It is not easy to draw a sharp boundary around the various activities, the lines, as Ivor says, are 'fuzzy' and staff work across what elsewhere might be seen as separate



organisations. Taking Coin Street Community Builders, and Coin Street Management Services and the various allied trusts, particularly the Coin Street Festival and South Bank Festival Trust, we can estimate between 40 to 50 people are involved in the enterprise, nearly 30 of these are staff. In 1998 Coin Street Community Builders had an income of £2.6m, with a surplus of £156,000 and assets worth £8m.

5.3.4 The Research

Coin Street is well known in policy circles but relatively little has been written on the management issues involved in such an enterprise. For this study there were several features which interested me. Firstly the organisation operates in a mixture of markets, commercial and public. It has accountabilities both to commercial markets (for example through loans from banks, the issuing of contracts to builders and architects) and to public bodies (for example to local authorities and government bodies such as the Housing Corporation. Coin Street can be placed between worker co-operatives and the world of charities. This location was an initial interest so as to illuminate values maintenance in this mixed environment. Coin Street has moved from a campaign group to an owner and property developer of real estate. How does such an organisation, or family of organisations, maintain its values?

Following initial discussions with the chief executive we agreed I would research Site A discussions. This was a current issue in the organisation, and contained some issues of fundamental importance for principles.

I conducted 10 interviews at Coin Street with 7 people over an 18 month period speaking to my key contact three times and another person twice. This timescale was not intentional and was partly dependent on organisational priorities at Coin Street. This had some advantages as I was connected to the organisation over a period when Site A discussions were being processed. The aim was to interview key people in the organisation such as the paid director and newer staff. As the study developed the importance of speaking to some of the management board and the users became important in order to gain something from the surrounding family of organisations. With the director's help I was able to achieve this although he did at one particularly busy stage (for Coin Street) comment on my persistence 'I have 30 post-its notes on my desk to ring you. I was going to!'). As a researcher I had reason to feel grateful to my key contact for not losing patience with a study which offered little immediate reward to Coin Street. Schein's (1985:21) comments on the clinical versus the ethnographic approach rang loudly in my ears.

The following people were interviewed (names changed): **Ivor** (Group Director - paid staff member), **Catherine** (Housing Services - paid staff member), **Patrick** (Director

of Finance - paid staff member). **Felicity** (Human Resources - paid staff member). **Paulo** (South Bank Employer's Group - paid staff member). **Natasha** (Board member CSCB and housing co-op resident). **Gerry** (Board member: treasurer, CSCB). I spoke to one person, **Jan**, off the record who had worked in the regeneration field and knew of Coin Street's work.

In addition to the interviews documentary evidence was examined. This included planning documents, brochures, festival leaflets, recruitment brochures for the co-operatives, as well as secondary literature about the developments in Coin Street in magazines, books and newspapers.

Coin Street and Organisational Values

5.3.5 Espoused Values at Coin Street

The espoused organisational values of the Coin Street Group act as a framework for the Coin Street Group as a whole, which includes the various companies and trusts. These seek to recognise 'the multi-cultural character' of the area, implement equal opportunities policies, and to have a 'sensitivity to the needs and aspirations of local residents and tenants.' The 'developing of affordable housing' on the Coin Street site is quoted. The promotion of housing co-operatives and community development trusts to meet housing and community needs is mentioned, and the desire to create a balanced local economy supporting residential and employment needs. They aim to use 'materials and practices which recognise the need to sustain the Earth's resources.'

5.3.6 Key stakeholders' Accounts of Values at Coin Street

My interviewees at Coin Street confirmed many of the above statements. Gerry, a committee member involved from the early days, suggested the values had emerged from a narrower campaign focus of 'jobs and housing':

It started out as a campaigning organisation with a much more limited purpose in the sense that the objectives were to get housing and jobs for local people.

He could now add to those two initial values the neighbourhood base and sense of relating to the local. The organisation's desire for financial sustainability was also now seen as important by Gerry:

It's always had a community base, a neighbourhood focus, based on the needs of local people living there although recently that has been widened to people who work locally there. So it's a classic development trust model, community based, some degree of local management although in Coin Street's case that, although

recognisable, is slightly diluted partly because of the Housing Corporation's requirement - but is still there - neighbourhood base. Not-for-profit. Aiming at sustainability.

Natasha, now a committee member but also a co-op housing resident, draws on the original inspiration which she remembers when she refers to the values:

I remember from years ago that big banner was up at Waterloo Bridge 'there is another way' and that was the first thing I ever cottoned on to about Coin Street, and having lived and breathed it now for about 11 years I really believe that this is a better way to live and a better way to try and make sense of your daily life in London.

I asked what this 'other way' meant for Natasha. She saw it as 'a sense of actually having the power to change things' and that there were mechanisms to allow that to happen. She described the passion and belief people felt in their work at Coin Street and how the attitude wasn't instrumental 'People aren't here just doing a job...it's not just a means to an end.' Rather there was a congruence towards the outcomes Coin Street was seeking:

I think a lot of it is to do with people being true to their values and having a complete passion and believing that it does work and wanting it to continue and trying to sustain it at all costs... a lot of people have really grafted at it and it's not for money and it's not for any kind of real gain apart from trying to uplift the community and make things better.

Felicity, an employee in a human resource role and a newer member of staff pointed out the commitment to co-operative housing which she felt was unusual in the current climate:

We are still such great supporters of co-operative housing, which I think is not particularly fashionable at the moment and we are great believers in that and pour a lot of resources into that and making it work.

Interestingly an offhand comment made to me by the director at the end of an interview offers an additional insight when he pointed out that 'delivery was a value too': a commitment to achieving outcomes.

5.3.7 Types of Values at Coin Street

I identify some of the organisational values as being contained within these written accounts:

- The provision of affordable housing and developing a mix of housing and employment provision on the site.
- A consideration of equalities issues, environmental issues, community involvement/ community views.

There are also some implicit values which can be drawn from the interviews and activities:

- A commitment to Coin Street Group as an independent organisation, financially self-sustaining, active in leading new developments in the area, acting as an engine and catalyst for change, working in partnerships with a range of other organisations (public, private and voluntary), a co-operative approach to working with them.

The values at Coin Street can be grouped into a range of product, process and operational values. I class delivering affordable housing, employment, environment improvements as **product values**, while the desire to achieve these outcomes is an **operational and process value** that privileges delivery. There are also **process values** around equality of opportunity and a co-operative approach to other organisations. These values can be categorised as having an overall concern for **social progress**, because of their link to tenants, local people and those on low incomes. The drive to be financially self-sustaining and independent can also be described as an **operational value**.

Factors affecting values at Coin Street

5.3.8 People Processes and Value carriers

The long service of some staff and board members at Coin Street is noteworthy. This includes senior staff such as Ivor, Patrick and Catherine and senior board members Gerry and Terrence. These founders or early supporters have maintained their motivation and can be described as value carriers. There are newer enthusiasts who 'carry the Coin Street flag', such as Natasha, although some of these can be intimidated by the experience of the older members. Ivor's influence as an early founder cannot be underestimated. He is a commanding figure on a daily basis and my own observation was that some people fall silent in his presence, perhaps in deferment or awe? These established figures congregate around the top of Coin Street in staff terms and informally at board level. Several respondents felt the 'old established members' were deferred to. The Coin Street story, alluded to earlier, seems to function as an oral history. The campaign story is told to new people and recited at conference audiences and to outsiders like myself. Some of this is contained in booklets, exhibitions and outdoor notice boards around the site. It has also

travelled further, deserving a mention in a tourist guide³. Another factor was cited by Felicity who pointed to the power of the **physical artifact** that is around them. There is a tangible reminder on a daily basis of the work which she saw as an inspiration.

5.3.9 External Advocates.

There are people who could come to Coin Street's rescue in a crisis. I have called these external advocates. These were not directly named but people were alluded to who are now in senior positions in government, the civil service or companies. This is partly a result of survival: the organisation has been in existence for 25 years and has built up a considerable series of contacts. It is much cited in the regeneration field, as Natasha explained, and the mix of public and private elements appeals to both sides of the political spectrum.

Gerry raised this point when I asked him what kept the organisation close to its beliefs. He cited three factors: the people involved, the effect of the successful achievements, and the continuing commitment to the original ideals of the early campaign. He added a fourth: a connection to the political process and making use of influential senior figures in the political machinery.

Mike: Do you have a sense of what keeps Coin Street 'Coin Street-ish'? What would you say the factors are?

Gerry: The people involved, the track record, commitment to the ideals of when the campaign was raging and the organisation was set up. I think also there is an understanding - that you can't divorce the community development process of what we are trying to achieve from the political process.

Mike: You mean big 'P'?

Gerry: Big 'P' and little 'P.' So Coin Street...may not have made itself very popular by understanding that and using that when it has needed to - so when we have had a problem with the Housing Corporation - we have gone over their heads to people we have made contacts with through the political networks.

There is another factor to mention which arose from this insight. Elsewhere I have raised the dangers of a coercive isomorphism within value based organisations through state funding mechanisms. We can glimpse through this extract the way influence can pass the other way. Value based organisations identified as 'trailblazers' may influence the political and community agenda. There are other developments of this nature that could be cited such as North Kensington Amenity Trust, the WISE programme in Scotland, initiatives around Settlement houses, and internationally, examples such as the South Shore Bank in

³ See Humphreys: Rough Guide to London 2001: 303

Chicago. The point here is that 'trailblazing' projects involved in creating social inventions may influence not only other community activists but also government policy.

5.3.10 Informal Processes

Felicity was able to describe to me a range of socialising, some of it long standing, and made reference to 'social leaders' among the staff team who act to bring people together between the different parts, which was a 'vital role.' Many of the longer term people have known each other over considerable periods, some from the original campaign days.

5.3.11 Organisational Structure

The structure of the family of organisations will now be summarised. (See Diagram 5.1) At its heart is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee **Coin Street Community Builders (CSCB)**, which could be described as responsible for the development side of projects, in many ways I felt it was the engine or heart of the whole Coin Street tribe. It employs about 15 people and Ivor is its director. It generates the commercial income and cross-subsidises the social parts of the work, such as the festival and gardens, which do not generate income but cost up to £0.25m per year. **Coin Street Secondary (Co-operative) (CSS)** employs no people. It is a housing association and a registered social landlord and can therefore attract public funding for grants to build social housing. It has a separate board to CSCB and staff are 'lent' to it from CSCB. There are then a series of independent **primary housing co-operatives: Palm, Mulberry, Redwood, Iroko**, which are managed and run by the tenants who are responsible for rent collection and services. There will eventually be seven housing co-ops when the site is fully developed. They lease their housing from Coin Street Secondary which receives rents to help pay back the loans used to build the properties. The housing co-ops can, if they elect, contract for some services to be done by a management services company, **South Bank Management Services (SBMS)**, set up for this purpose. SBMS is, in effect, a subsidiary of Coin Street Community Builders, and undertakes the maintenance of the park and public walkways. It also undertakes the marketing and PR side of Coin Street Community Builders. The **Coin Street Festival** is managed though South Bank Management Services. It runs an annual free festival of arts and participation events during the summer. Coin Street Community Builders also sponsor a **South Bank Festival Trust** which involves some of the major museums in the area. Another organisation which Coin Street Community Builders helped set up is the **South Bank Employer's Group**, a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee, which is a partnership of nearly 20 businesses in the

area (including Shell, London Weekend Television, Royal National Theatre and Coin Street Community Builders itself). This seeks improvements in the area, employs seven staff and shares office space with Coin Street Community Builders. People now talk of the **Coin Street Group** by which is meant Coin Street Community Builders, Coin Street Secondary, South Bank Management Services and the Coin Street Festival.

An annual **away weekend** of staff and board members is seen as a crucial integrating device. This serves as both strategic planning, information sharing and social glue for moulding the family of organisations together according to Ivor:

It's a quite a big event, we now number about 50 people, so some quite big discussions. It's balanced now between hard work sessions, and then bonding, and a bit of free time and it works quite well.

In addition Ivor described an away day event each year for himself, a board member and the gardeners responsible for the park. The aim here was to examine a piece of good practice elsewhere and learn about that endeavour but also to reinforce something of the importance of the public space for Coin Street. Festivals and public events could be seen to be damaging to the gardens but flexible use of the amenities is an important part of the life of the area. The gardeners are thus integrated into the overall purposes and actively engaged with further developments.

The Council of Management, the **Board**, meets every 6 weeks and is the decision making body for CSCB. The features that I want to illustrate about this highly complex structure are as follows. Firstly, at a formal level there are a mix of overlapping memberships of boards. Staff, too, are shared across different parts of the group. The aim is to create an association of organisations and groups with different purposes but common core aims. The structure resembles a 'trust' structure where there is some reliance on informal relationships and understandings cemented by common understandings. The second point to note at a formal level is the role of the annual away days which act as strategic planning but also bonding events. They are the occasion when the whole 'family' of organisations comes together.

The **board** is consciously designed to have a protected entry to membership. The organisation does not see itself as *directly* accountable to a given community. Ivor suggested that an open membership would have been counterproductive in the early days. Paul saw it as helpful that the board had not been open to pressures from competing communities, or other interests in the early days, so as to avoid entryism and lobbying for specific concerns. Ivor described it as an oligarchic structure. When the board needs new members it undertakes a skills profile and then seeks a person with that profile from the area. Local

residency remains a criterion for being on the board. Coin Street carefully selects its governing group.

One final structural issue to note is **constitutions**. The point was made several times in the interviews that there was no ultimate way to stop Coin Street being 'de-mutualised.' The constitutional arrangements of interlocking organisations and covenants would however make it extremely difficult and time consuming to 'unravel' as Paul pointed out. The covenant on the land acted like a condition meaning that there could not be a commercial sale of the land. Any proceeds would simply be distributed to the London boroughs.

The strictures of the organisation are kept compact with separate units or projects to undertake development work. The exception is the management services part which employs up to 20 staff. One of my respondents cautiously suggested the senior staff maintained a strong leadership, liked to be involved in everything and did not want the core of the organisation to grow much bigger.

5.3.12 Income Streams

Most respondents inside the Coin Street Group argued that it operated in commercial market settings in conjunction with public sector markets. I think this is accurate. Unlike the other organisations I studied, Coin Street has the largest amount of joint involvement in both public and private sector markets. One respondent felt they were moving more into public sector markets for some funding and envisaged this might cause some dislocation to the organisation. The principle however remains one of financial sustainability of the core of the organisation through ownership of land and using such resources to earn the organisation money. Coin Street appears to be undertaking public service work yet operating in commercial markets. I want to explore the issues this mixture presents by looking at some of the freedoms, constraints and dilemmas and how these affect the values.

Ownership of the land was crucial to the success of Coin Street Community Builder's development. Ivor saw the way development trusts like Coin Street could remain true to their mission was through the financial independence the ownership of the land permitted:

There is absolutely no question, we are more independent now. The reason we're more independent is that we're financially independent...the absolute key to you being effective is to get financial independence. However you do it. Because if we had been dependent on Lambeth or Southwark [local authorities] we'd have gone.

Most community organisations are dependent on local authority funding.

Ownership of the land gives Coin Street the opportunity to borrow money like a commercial organisation. Ivor pointed out that Coin Street had never been financially supported by Lambeth Borough Council other than for the first housing development. Coin Street's car parks had provided income streams to support its operation until it was able to develop some sites for co-operative housing and improve the area. This does not mean that securing loans has always been easy. With Site A for example, Ivor contrasted loans from banks with money from local authority sources. Ivor identified the latter as imposing more conditions. There was a great simplicity in gaining money from the private sector.

...the real problem is the local state or government or anybody else telling you what to do. With the banks they're either prepared to put in their money or they're not. And if they put in their money and you're paying them back they'll leave you alone.

This points to an accountability that is far less ideological than that connected with state funding regimes. This does not mean there are no accountability issues with such commercial incomes. Gerry, as a board member, argued there were threats with both commercial and government income but they were different in nature. With public sector funding:

There are conditions of funding regimes which can be pretty arbitrary... and it's sometimes not very easy to explain what we are trying to do...

State funding was far more prescriptive on internal structures and dynamics. The Housing Corporation, in an explicit dose of coercive isomorphism, insisted on an alteration to the internal structure of the organisation. It required the development wing (CSCB) to be separated from the housing side (CSS). Gerry explained Coin Street had been forced to split the 'unity of purpose' which he saw as an essential part of the success at Coin Street - the link between a housing development, employment, community activity and environmental improvements.

...when Coin Street was set up...the way that unity of purpose was transferred from a campaign was to set up two organisations - one was Coin Street Community Builders which was a trust, and the other was Coin Street Secondary Co-op. The trust itself couldn't do [housing] so we had to set up a vehicle for the housing. The unity of purpose was maintained by an overlapping membership. The Corporation has never been happy with that. In their eyes, with this model, of a development trust with a housing side and the company Coin Street Builders: they feared a leakage of money [away from grants for housing] was possible...

The original expediency of two organisations was something that was sought to be

overcome within the Coin Street Group, effectively by overlapping memberships. This initial division was driven deeper by the Corporation who, by degree, sought to further reduce the overlapping membership which acted as the strong link. Gerry saw it as a difficulty:

Effectively we had managed to hold that off until the last flats - they made us separate or they wouldn't give us the money...So now, in my view, that's not good - the two parts have had to be split into two organisations. Ideally we would have liked to have kept them. The reason for that trust structure was to have that idea of the objectives of a unity of purpose which is possible with the same organisation - it is made more difficult if you have two separate parts - it is not impossible - it's more difficult. So that was forced on us by the Housing Corporation...

Contrasting notions are being expressed here. The organisation is described as highly independent because of its ownership of the asset of land. However, state funding regimes seek to delineate the form of the organisational structure. Coin Street can operate independently for the core development operation, paying staff, maintaining offices and so on. This is underwritten by its own earned money from the housing and other commercial ventures. For Coin Street initiating development work requires it to engage with either banks or state regimes. It is here where the difficulties emerge

5.3.13 Social Movements

Six areas can be identified where the organisation intersects with social movements. Firstly it is part of the housing/homelessness issue and is especially linked to ideas around co-operative housing. Secondly it identifies with the environmental movement and, as Ivor suggests, undertakes to build to high environmental specifications where possible:

If you ask me on the environmental movement, yeah, we're definitely a part of it...Are we as pure as pure?...no ...but we tried very hard on the latest housing.

Thirdly, it has links with community movements such as neighbourhood organisations. As Ivor put it: '...there are still campaigns, community group campaigns... We work with other community groups around central London.'

A fourth area, (raised by Gerry, Ivor, and Felicity) was the links with other development trusts around the country. Coin Street has played an active role in establishing the national organisation and Gerry has been the national chair. This is also a 'movement', in Diani's (1992) terms.

Fifthly, Ivor identified Coin Street as an important part of the social enterprise movement.

Sixthly, several respondents (Natasha and Felicity) raised a further issue which has some links to idea of movements and the propagation of values. Coin Street is seen as an influential 'trailblazer' at national and international conferences and lauded as a positive role model. Natasha had had this experience at an international event:

Coin Street's name just kept coming up - a place that everyone hailed as being the organisation that have actually done what they said they wanted to do...beat the system and cut through all the red tape and won. By giving people back their ownership of the land they really succeeded. By giving people power that they can actually succeed...

The 'trailblazing' at Coin Street is similar to that at the Centre for Alternative Technology. Both have found their ideas adopted by more mainstream organisations. There are several examples of this: the developing a mixed neighbourhood, attracting a local economy into a housing development, mixing commercial and social aims with community involvement in planning. These have now become an espoused orthodoxy through government regeneration schemes⁴.

Ivor:...there's a respect for what's been done....The battles we've fought, affordable housing, mix and balance community, all those things have sort of -

Mike: Become main stream?

Ivor: Yeah. They've become mainstream issues. Plus of course over the time politically [Coin Street] becomes a bigger player.

The final comment is also suggestive of another phenomenon, touched on earlier that influence from statutory bodies is not one way. People prominent in Coin Street have become influential in government task forces and with the Housing Corporation.

To return directly to social movements. Coin Street is part of a tendency around community involvement in urban development and housing issues. My assessment though is that the organisation is more influenced by community concerns than environmental issues. Coin Street would be far more troubled, I suspect, by local community protests against, say, poor quality housing or policies on housing allocations, than it would by complaints about environmental specifications.

A Values Example at Coin St

5.3.14 The Issue of Site A

The development of Site A at Coin Street provides a convenient example to discuss

⁴ See guidance on 'sustainability' post SRB funding (DETR SRB Bidding Guidance Notes 2000).

values and factors of influence. The background is given first followed by a discussion of what occurred during the time of the study.

5.3.15 Background to Site A

Site A is one of the last parts of the Coin Street site that will need to be developed. The site currently holds the CSCB office and a car park which provides an income stream towards paying back the original loan on the whole site. The phasing of developments always needs to be carefully balanced so that income streams can continue to support the organisation during development phases.

The site was intended to be a mixture of housing and commercial development. The affordable housing development would require funds from private loans and public sources, most notably, the Housing Corporation. Public subsidy was likely to involve a mix of housing not appropriate to the site. This is because housing units for large families remain in short supply in the borough and so attract public funds. These groups do not generally apply to live on the Coin Street site in the north of the borough and distant from schools. The overwhelming need in this area, according to Ivor, was for single properties:

We had 500 people applying for a one bedroom flat...whereas the 5 bedroom houses which we built next door are actually unbelievably hard to fill..getting [the borough] to come up with people that want to live in the centre of town.

Another challenge Coin Street faced with the property development was from the commercial sector which, in lending money for projects of this nature, require a financial gearing of lending to asset value that is around 30%.

Ivor: ...the asset cover that lenders require simply wouldn't be there. The value of all of our things simply wouldn't be sufficient.

Patrick: It would be about 16%. They want you to have something that is worth at least 33% more than you are spending.

This presented Coin Street with a number of problems. Building one or two bedroom accommodation did not meet the priorities of public funders such as the Housing Corporation or the borough. Private finance alone would involve rents having to be set too high. The zonal plan for the land committed Coin Street to a mixed use development with affordable housing and commercial activity such as restaurants, leisure and retail outlets. An additional issue was that time was a factor: the covenant specified development by a deadline and penalty clauses would apply if this did not commence soon. Within this organisational conundrum Coin Street faced a key value dilemma - how to maintain its

commitment to build affordable housing on the site in the face of financial pressures and the physical constraints on the site.

5.3.16 What Happened about Site A

Due to the pressures staff were under at Coin Street the research was conducted over a more extended timescale than with other cases. This did however enable me to track something of the development of the issue over an 18 month period between my initial briefing in June 2000 and final interview in October 2001. I will therefore use a chronology to plot the unfolding of this values issue.

Phase 1: Prior to September 2000

Discussions about alternative ways to finance the housing on Site A had started amongst board members before the May 1999 away days and staff had begun to investigate alternatives. There was particular interest in a new funding idea suggested by the Joseph Rowntree Trust called Caspar housing which involves building affordable housing without Housing Corporation subsidy. Put simply an organisation borrows money to build and rents are set as low as possible. If subsidised rents were around £100 per week and market housing was £400, Caspar rents would be midway. These mid way rents would be deemed affordable for some people in 'housing need' in the area, although not poor by conventional view. Some of this group has since been termed 'key workers.' By Autumn 1999 according to the board minutes, members were voicing concerns and one said it would be 'a massive departure' for Coin Street to consider building some non-social housing, as the housing was intended for local people and such a departure would create a different kind of community. A counter to this view was whether Could Coin Street could, as some housing associations were doing, build some property for sale to subsidise others for social rent, even though the covenant did not appear to allow this? There was agreement that the board would prefer medium rents to losing the site altogether, and consideration was given to a phased development whereby the commercial parts would be built first to try to raise money for a later development of housing.

At the **December 1999** board meeting discussion moved to the non-housing aspect of Site A, and here the idea emerged of replacing some of the parts of the site which had been earmarked for commercial use with the Caspar cost housing instead. This would maintain the area designated for social housing as large as before. There was also a suggestion to erect a tower - as this had worked successfully on one of Coin Street's other sites despite initial worries. A proposal was then discussed to develop a tower with over 240 flats with one third Housing Corporation subsidised, one third Caspar (cost rent for

key workers), and one third at market rent for those 'in need' but who could afford full rates (eg consultants and doctors at the nearby hospital). This would enable more social housing to be delivered than had been considered before. It would also mean greater income flow into the area. This could enable the provision of community facilities and art schemes which would benefit residents on the other Coin Street sites too. Although positive suggestions were made about accommodation for nurses and students, at least one person voiced the concern that there was a need to justify why market value housing was needed on the site. Another felt there could be tensions between people paying different rents in the same building.

Overall the need for subsidised housing was re-asserted and that there might be a case for Caspar cost rent housing but no consensus was reached on market rent housing. Ivor felt that some people had not understood that the market rent housing was to substitute for commercial shops or work units and was not to replace low cost housing. Catherine felt more established board members did not always appreciate that middle earners faced housing pressures.

Catherine: ...it was quite helpful for us and our members, the Evening Standard ran feature articles on the housing needs of people who, perhaps to our older more retired board members, might seem to be on quite high incomes. So that has become a public issue.

By the February 2000 board meeting financial work had been completed and most importantly permission for a one year postponement of the development from the covenant holder was obtained. **At the May 2000 away day** discussions started about revising the idea of housing for people 'in need' as in the Covenant. Could staff at St Thomas's be considered 'in need'? This would enable a development to proceed in line with the covenant and create affordable homes - but it would stretch the definition of 'in need' - this created a great deal of discussion. Patrick felt the combination approach 'was the way to make it work...to make the housing and the commercial work.' The opportunity for a swimming pool arose which would increase the value of any market housing and would also fit existing Coin Street residents' expressed needs in a MORI poll. Approval to look at the feasibility of the pool was given. That was the stage reached by December 2000.

Phase 2: Position at December 2000

When I spoke to Patrick in **December 2000** he was keen to have a clear brief by June 2001. The idea so far was a housing tower sitting on a podium which might have a mix of swimming, amenities, sports, and visitor centre:

The basic thing is it needs to be an income generating site...this site and the OXO site are our two income generating sites...there are some basic requirements...that is what the board have agreed over the last two years.

Phase 3: Position at May 2001 Away Weekend

Nearly 40 people were at this event. There had now been three successive annual planning events where Site A had been discussed. Patrick felt there was now general agreement:

The first couple of years...there was quite a lot of heated discussions about the sort of housing that we wanted - but there is this agreement now on the sort of mix that we are looking for.

What hadn't happened, by this stage was agreement on what the other parts of the site should be, although there was agreement on a swimming pool.

Phase 4: Position at September 2001

When I met Ivor in September 2001 he felt that the precise details about Site A were not fully clarified but there was a consensus on the general proposal. It might be a development as high as thirty stories with significant housing, a 4/5 story podium over half the site with commercial elements. Patrick confirmed the plan was for three sorts of housing: low cost housing (social housing), cost rent (Caspar), and market rent housing. They were still looking at sports facilities and a swimming pool and there would not be a problem with the covenant now the timetable had been revised back a year. As at September 2001 it was still uncertain whether the Housing Corporation, although keen, would provide funding. Patrick stressed the need for the cross-subsidy to work as it did on other Coin Street sites.

The other schemes we have done have all had elements of commercial subsidy to them - restaurants and other units in the Iroka [housing co-op development] on the underground car park...what we are looking at on this site is a commercial subsidy that works with the capital cost of the market rent housing...

In response to my questioning about Coin Street's freedom to manoeuvre Patrick went on to point out:

We've had to adapt at every turn, every scheme, how we build the cross subsidy in...how we can work that...no-one tells us how to do that. That's something we have to come up with and it's entirely up to us if it works or if it doesn't.

How had the board overcome some of its initial reservations? Ivor thought after several discussions the board had become clear that the market rent housing was not in place of social housing but was in place of some of the commercial allocation (which would have been shops or units). The issues had he felt had now become financial - how to raise the money to do this project.

5.3.17 Factors Involved on Values in the Site A Example

The issue could be seen as a purely technical discussion where a novel solution was developed to provide a housing mix, and a tower to gain more accommodation. However I think this misses the way that values interceded to drive the direction of the solution. Coin Street were prompted to maintain their values of building social housing and ended up with a plan to deliver more than they had originally intended. There was a compromise to some degree - replacing some of the commercial development by the element of market rent housing does change the balance of those living on the site. Nevertheless the organisation does have a value of being financially self-sustaining and their decision does enable a wider range of amenities on the site - a consistent community demand.

How did the result come about? Looking first at **people processes**, firstly, key senior staff were clear about providing affordable housing and were actively seeking ways to make this possible given the constraints. Secondly, **the board** was active in maintaining the position that social housing should not be abandoned. There were arguments about the definitions of 'in need' people on quite high salaries (for the market rent housing element). This was confronted but eventually accepted as a way round the covenant clause and to enable a greater number of social units. **Value carriers** were operating both in the staff and on the board and had a sense of the origins of Coin Street when citing the possible 'massive departure.' Thirdly, turning to some of the **structural issues**, an active, challenging board remained committed to social housing as an outcome. Fourthly, the development was debated through **three successive annual away days** for board and staff of the family of Coin Street organisations. Fifthly, the organisation had to squeeze a workable solution from the **twin constraints of both market and quasi-market constraints**. Sixthly, **social movements** appeared to have had less of a direct affect on this issue. However board members and staff did maintain their stance on social housing which I assess to be partly a response to the original campaign objectives, driven by a community campaign.

5.3.18 Preliminary Assessment of Values Reproduction at Coin Street

People processes. Some of the founders and original campaigners are still involved

in the organisation. These **value carriers** are keen to keep the organisation true to the original aims. Over half the board may fit this description and they are reported to contest loudly new developments, such as the mix of housing on Site A. There is strong **overt leadership** from these senior figures. The organisation has developed **networks of influence** in political and civil service circles. It also has developed connections in the business world through the South Bank Employer's Group. It is increasingly being seen as a 'model' project and has supporters, **external advocates**, in influential positions. There are **relations of trust** within the Coin Street Group and with the associated organisations. The organisation is surrounded by the **tangible physical artifacts** of its endeavours. Staff, board and stakeholders are thus immersed in the work.

Structural Issues. The array of interlocking organisations provide some **constitutional boundaries** making it hard to unravel. The board membership of CSCB is a self replacing oligarchy with new people invited in. There is a **protected membership** structure. People with the requisite skills can be drawn in from other parts of the family of organisations, such as the housing co-ops, or from wider groups. The Coin Street family of organisations are contained in relatively **small units** (CSCB, CSMS, Coin Street Festival) which mitigates against a large formalised bureaucracy. This may replicate an original campaign structure where close contacts are maintained between those involved and hierarchy is less developed. It is not clear how conscious this strategy is however there were suggestions that more established staff 'do not want the organisation to grow too large.'

Co-operating Interlinking Organisations. The constellation of organisations are linked by a conscious strategy of shared and overlapping membership either of staff, board and to some extent core purposes. There is a tacit understanding that these interwoven organisations will co-operate with each other for common purposes. This is designed to maintain a **common coherent vision** and organisational values over a network of organisations with different tasks, responsibilities and constitutions. Apart from the **board meetings** there is the important **annual away weekend** which now involves up to 50 people and engages in forward planning and informal socialising.

Market and Contracts. The **financial assets**, specifically land, gives a degree of financial independence and an ability to mix cocktails of funding. It does not need to rely on local authority support for core funding which can allow it scope to hold to its values. It still needs to move deftly between **commercial and quasi markets**.

It is connected to a range of **social movements**: environmental, housing, community networks, but is not a central member (apart from the nebulous social enterprise movement). There is a **favourable political and policy environment** which the

Group has played a role in creating.

5.4 Oxford, Swindon and Gloucester Co-operative Society (OSG) and Lincoln Co-operative Society

The cliché: The Caring Sharing Co-op

Their statements: 'A Successful Co-operative Business' (OSG)

'All Together Better Business' (Lincoln)

5.4 OSG and Lincoln Co-operative Society Overview

A Contrasting Minor Case of Values in Two Large Consumer Co-operatives

5.4.1 OSG and Lincoln Co-op Societies

While involved in the study I was also involved in a research project 're-asserting the co-operative advantage' with Roger Spear at the Co-operatives Research Unit. Part of this research was to examine examples of UK co-operative societies that were involved in innovative initiatives to regenerate their values. I want to highlight here work I undertook with **Oxford, Swindon and Gloucester Co-operative Society** and **Lincoln Co-operative Society** as a complement to the main study. The 're-asserting the co-operative advantage' project has been written up elsewhere (Spear 2000).

The birth of the modern UK consumer co-operative movement is often dated from the Rochdale pioneers in 1844. By 1955 the UK consumer co-operative had reached a peak with 30,000 retail shops and 20% market penetration in terms of food sales and 13 million were reported in membership (Co-operative Commission report annex 8). However 'much of the movement's recent history has been one of loss of market share and retrenchment' (Spear 2000:96). For the movement, asset rich, but still in decline a key question was how to re-assert the relevance of the large consumer co-operative in the modern world.

The **Lincoln Co-operative Society Ltd** (Lincoln Co-operative) and the **Oxford, Swindon and Gloucester Co-operative Society (OSG)** are most succinctly described in formal terms as independent consumer co-operatives owned by their members and registered as an Industrial and Provident Society and regulated by the Financial Services Authority. Nationwide there are about 60 such consumer Co-operative Societies.

Lincoln Co-operative operates food shops, filling stations, department stores as

well as pharmacies, travel shops, a funeral service, a dairy, a car sales group and a property section. With nearly 50 retail outlets and, employing over 2,000 people, it is one of the largest private sector organisations in the county. In 1999 it's annual turnover stood at £206 million with total fixed assets amounting to £93 million. **Oxford Swindon and Gloucester** has an annual turnover of £270m, with over 70,500 active members and 3,400 employees. OSG puts the Co-operative values of concern for community and co-operation among co-operatives into action by donating 1% of profits to the Community Dividend Scheme and a further 1.5% to Co-operative Development.

5.4.2 This Research

I studied the OSG and the Lincoln Society, as two organisations at the forefront of the move to member regeneration, as part of the Co-operative Advantage Research in 1999/2000. I interviewed five staff, including **Paul**, and one board member, **Alan**, between December 1999 and March 2000 at Lincoln. I interviewed one staff member, **Peter**, at OSG in September 1999, **Jean**, a board member in April 2000. A staff member, from OSG, **Katharina**, attended the cross-organisational seminar for this study in November 2001 (Names have not been changed in these case studies as more detailed information from this material has been published). In the ideas presented here, which are drawn from that research, I quote selectively from either organisation.

5.4.3 Values

The espoused values of the co-operatives are based on:

...the values of self-help, self responsibility, democracy, equality and solidarity In the tradition of their founders, Co-operative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others.

(Co-operative Commission Report: January 2001)

These are underpinned by **seven principles**: voluntary and open membership, democratic member control, members economic participation, autonomy and independence, education, training and information, co-operation among Co-operatives, concern for the community. Of particular interest here is how the membership invigoration processes affected the values of building a democratic co-operative organisation.

As Alan Middleton, long term director on the Lincoln board pointed out in his interview with me:

Why did the Building Societies decide to de-mutualise? I think they severed the link

with their members. In the co-operative movement we have - just - kept it going.

This points to the importance of the member base and the work both OSG and Lincoln have been taking to reinvigorate it.

Factors Affecting Reproduction

5.4.4 People Processes and Value Carriers

There are three aspects of interest here. Firstly the work to regenerate the membership at OSG is attributed to a few key people. Jean attributed the new member initiatives to the chief executive and Peter who arrived as member relations officer in 1995.

These initiatives all happened because of Peter... certain people like Peter have been crucial...he has often been the catalyst, ideas come from elsewhere too, from the co-op college for example.

Value carriers, such as Peter, and external advocates such as Mervyn, with a long knowledge of the movement, have been able to instil and support re-invigoration.

A further development was in seeking to integrate the organisation so member relations became part of marketing and was changed from being an 'add-on extra' department to an important central role. A small example Peter gave was in the appointment of a new Food Controller who would be asked about member services during the job interview. As Peter put it:

If membership is ingrained in the organisation's culture then that's a real driver for the society

One of the innovations introduced by Peter was to broaden the idea of involvement of members which I will come to next.

5.4.5 Structures

At OSG three different levels of participation have been identified. This ranges from those members who receive mailings, through to who became involved in group activities to those who want to be involved in the democratic processes. Members might move from one level to another rather than having to leap from being a shopper to being on the board.

At Lincoln Society a dividend card, linked to membership, gained new members and provided a way of keeping up to date details on members. Over the previous two years the

Society had more than doubled its membership to claim over 130,000 members by 1999. At the end of this period the percentage of trade done by members, by volume, was between 50 - 80% (depending on the area of sales) and the majority of the Society's customers had become its members.

The strategy then has been to find mechanisms that mean members are not a small and irrelevant grouping with customers seen as more important to the economic survival of the organisation. Peter sums this up neatly when he says OSG needs to be 'a successful, co-operative, business' with the emphasis on all three words.'

Integration of the values around member involvement have been important in both organisations. OSG have re-organised to place member services within the marketing department to make the customer/member connection explicit and integrate member issues within the organisation. Within the Lincoln Society a major course, 'Altogether Better Business' was a spur to organisational integration amongst the staff. It was a rare chance for all staff in each area of the business to come together. 'It was an attempt to develop common views and ethos across the organisation' according to Paul.

A final point on structural issues is the board. Alan Middleton pointed out there is an important point about governance especially for lay boards which need to be trained and skilled at challenging professional managers.

We change the president of the Board every year...The change of president means there can be challenging - it empowers the whole board...failures have occurred in Co-op Societies where the president and the CEO have been too close.

5.4.6 Income Streams

Both co-operatives are operating in commercial markets. In some cases dilemmas between membership wishes and market realities emerge. Certain products that the co-ops would like to stock such as fair traded goods, organic food, GM free food, local produce in some cases, may not in some stores be viable particularly those in poorer areas where price is a premium. These are not easy compromises to make for a trading membership organisation. As Peter put it:

It is often difficult on ethical issues. Most active members are drawn from middle class backgrounds...imposing [ethical products] on stores not serving areas with middle class clientele you can fall flat on your face.

Lincoln emphasises quality customer service and building a loyal local customer base. Their niche convenience stores lend themselves well to a personal style.

For many voluntary financial reserves or their own voluntary income or assets, are

often cited as an important guarantors of independence and ability to innovate. For the co-ops Katharina felt financial reserves had been a negative factor as the movement had rested on its financial assets. I am grateful to Katharina Lüddecke from OSG, who attended the cross organisational November seminar I organised, for this insight. Alan Middleton suggested the movement had 'grown but then gone to sleep.' As he pointed out, in his address to the 1998 Co-operative Congress in Lincoln ,co-operatives were in decline but not short of cash: they collectively owned over £2 billion in assets.

5.4.7 Social Movement

The co-operative movement is international in scope and stand beyond the institutional manifestations of the co-operative stores, farms or even banks and political parties. There is a wider base from which to recruit staff and members as those with an affiliation or loyalty to co-operative values are likely to be pre-disposed to co-operative stores.

Another aspect here is the link to local community and co-operative organisations. This is one of the principles of the co-operative principles and at Lincoln in particular is taken very seriously. Alan described the very high penetration of the Society into local community and civic groups which was actively encouraged:

There are virtually no committees we're not involved with in this town!...This is a very deliberate and conscious policy of the board.

It also provides business opportunities in the town through a wide and trusted social network of organisations.

A Values Example from OSG and Lincoln

5.4.8 Regenerating Values

A key concern for many co-operative society's had been survival. Values have played a role in the survival and regeneration process by drawing on how the co-operative is different to other stores. OSG was no exception and 20 years earlier had faced extinction. For OSG there was an immediate financial crisis to tackle. It has now become one of the most forward looking societies and has developed an approach to regenerating the values attached to member services and building these in as part of a business strategy.

5.4.9 Reproduction of Values in Large Commercial Member Co-operatives

I have examined here the regeneration of organisational values of **democratic member involvement** in the running of two consumer co-operatives illustrated from two forward thinking co-operative societies with interesting approaches to the **regeneration of values**. This has involved **structural changes**, in the form of instigating new member involvement processes and the re-insertion of strong **economic incentives** for customers to become members. There have been moves at **internal integration** in both co-operatives. There have been connections outwards to **allied organisations in the community and co-operative field**. On the business side there was an emphasis on customer service at Lincoln. Linking the **organisational values into the business** is crucial for organisations operating in commercial markets. We can see at OSG how **value carriers** and **external advocates** have had an effect on the changes. In both co-operatives there relation to the national and international co-operative movement was important. Financial security is not strong enough alone to maintain organisational values.

Chapter 6:

Analysis of Results

This chapter analyses the findings from the case studies in more depth. This chapter revisits the research questions and then falls into three parts. In the first part, those organisations operating predominately in quasi-market settings (Ormiston, Shelter and St Mungo's) are examined followed in the second part by those organisations operating predominately in market settings (Infinity, CAT and Coin Street). In both sections a similar analytical framework is adopted. Some general remarks applicable to both groups are made in conclusion.

6.1 Introduction

The starting question for this study was: how do quality social economy organisation reproduce their organisational values? This was examined in three parts. Firstly, what were the **organisational strategies or processes** these organisations employed to maintain their core organisational values? Secondly, what were the **features**, that helped or hindered these organisations in reproducing their values? Thirdly, what were the **constraints** from the environment these organisations faced in reproducing their values? The effects from income streams from commercial markets or government contracts and grants was a special interest.

6.2 The Quasi-markets Organisations

6.2.1 Constraints: income sources

Ormiston, Shelter and St Mungo's were studied as organisations operating in quasi-markets. Before proceeding to analyse the findings from this study in more detail some financial information is presented to inform the discussion which follows.

Figure 6.1 shows the sources of income for the three organisations. These sources have been analysed under three categories which look at the relative amounts they received from voluntary sources, statutory sources and from sales and services.

The three categories used are not idiosyncratic but are based on the Charities Aid Foundation's research into the sector. All the figures are from the accounts of these

organisations as published in their annual reports. The figures have been rounded. The breakdown of income sources into categories (voluntary, statutory, and sales and services) is taken from comparative research by the Charities Aid Foundation (see Saxon-Harold 1995:10-12). **Voluntary income** includes donations, legacies, fund raising, covenants/Gift Aid, and income from shops. **Statutory income** includes fees, contracts and grants from central or local government. **Sales of goods or services** is the income from the sale of publications, training and merchandising. Also included here is income from investments and commercial rents which is relatively small in these cases.

For **Shelter**, the statutory income includes grants and fees from central and local government (£3.3m) and contracts with the Legal Services Commission (£0.7m). Itemised separately, under **other grants (2)**, is the £0.7m income from the Community Fund (formerly National Lottery Charities Board) as it is sometimes disputed how this should be categorised. Under **voluntary income**, donations (£11.1m), income from charity shops (£5.7m), and legacies (£3.6m), were the most significant. Under **sales and services** the largest items were publications (£0.39m), merchandising (£0.35), and training (£0.24). In calculating the **percentage of income** from statutory sources at 17% the Community Fund income has been included. The exclusion of this item would only reduce this figure to 15%.

Figure 6.1: Quasi-market organisations' sources of income analysed by amounts and percentages			
6.1 (a) Income sources by amount			
Year ending:	Shelter (1) 2000	Ormiston (2) 2000	StMungo's (3) 2001
	£ m	£m	£m
Total income:	26.0	1.4	20.0
Voluntary income:	20.4	0.3	1.8
Other grants (1):		0.4	
Other grants (2):	0.7		0.3
	}		}
Statutory income:	3.8	0.7	17.7
Sales:	1.1	0.1	0.1
Other:	0	0	1.4
6.1 (b) Income sources by percentage			
Voluntary income:	78%	50%	10%
State income:	17%	50%	90%
Sales and services:	4%	0	0
This table should be read in conjunction with the text.			

For the **Ormiston Children and Families Trust**, a £0.37m grant (**other grants 1**) from the sister foundation, the Ormiston Trust, has been included as part of **voluntary income**.

For **St Mungo's**, **statutory income** includes income from central and local government (at £6.9m and £1.7m respectively). Included within this category, as **St Mungo's** does, is the rental income from hostel users (£8.7m) which comes almost exclusively from statutory benefits. Under **other grants (2)** £0.3m for refurbishment, from the Housing Corporation, has been included in statutory income. The exclusion of this amount would make negligible difference to the calculation of the percentage of income from statutory sources. **Voluntary income** here includes the organisation's own fundraising (£1.8m).

6.2.2 Implications of Figures on Income Sources

The analysis of the organisations' accounts into these categories is intended to broadly indicate their degree of operation in public or private sector markets. The lower half of table, 6.1 (b), provides a useful summary. None of these three organisations derived a significant proportion of their income from trading through sales, services or investments. **This can be taken as an indicator that these organisations are not operating significantly in commercial markets.**

Two qualifications should be offered here. The first concerns Shelter and the second **St Mungo's**. Shelter does derive £5.7m from its volunteer-run charity shops which represents 22% of its total income and which could be considered trading activity in commercial markets. However, the CAF categories classify such income as part of voluntary income. There is some justification for this. These shops are regarded as charitable operations under UK law and receive various fiscal advantages, such as business tax relief, in recognition of this. Nationwide over 125,000 volunteers are involved in an activity that has a turnover exceeding £400m per annum but which does face increasing pressures to professionalise (Goodall 2000:1). The case of how to classify the endeavours of charity shops is indicative of the blurring of boundaries between private and voluntary sectors to which Six (1994:407) alluded. If we did exclude the contribution of shops to voluntary income, Shelter would still have 57% of its total income from voluntary sources and 17% from the state. My argument here however is not primarily financial. Running charity shops is not central to Shelter's work and does not have a direct impact on influencing the organisational values of advising homeless people or campaigning.

The second qualification is that **St Mungo's** classifies its sizable income from hostel rents as 'statutory income.' This is because it is derived from welfare benefits provided

from the public sector. I was initially uncertain about terming this 'statutory' income because of the indirect relation, however on reflection concurred with their classification. This is not *commercial* income from rent. If these rough sleepers were not in a St Mungo's hostel they would, most likely, either be on the street or in some other form of state or voluntary sector provision. St Mungo's staff mostly administer the resident's claims with the Benefits Agency and receive direct payment for rent. There may be a market here, in some senses, as residents could for example, move between the hostels of different agencies. Essentially however providing support and accommodation for rough sleepers is a publicly funded activity.

6.2.3 Does Voluntary Income Equate with Independence?

The table shows varying degrees of state support, from 90% at St Mungo's through to 50% at Ormiston and 17% at Shelter. **The degree of voluntary income the organisations could call upon was only 10% at St Mungo's, it reached 50% at Ormiston but was nearly 80% at Shelter.** These figures correspond with comments made by respondents inside the organisations. No easy connection can, however, be made between these figures and the degree of organisational independence. We would need to look inside the organisations to see how the various government funds are used and indeed this was part of my research.

The figures are, however, of use in two ways. Firstly, organisational actors at a senior level are aware of these figures and take them into account in their discourse on organisational independence and often link these to their values. One senior respondent at Shelter, for example, cited the 80% figure, in part with pride, but also as evidence that the organisation had not been co-opted and could therefore pursue its own agenda. A senior finance respondent at St Mungo's, in contrast, was nervous of their dependence on government funds and was grateful for the contribution of their own fundraisers. At Ormiston the cushion provided by receiving a quarter of income from the sister trust was seen as offering some degree of autonomy if state contracts became too invasive. Financial independence is important - this point is also put quite forcefully by CAT and Coin Street in the second part of this chapter. My argument here is that such figures *alone* tell us only a part of the picture. There is a similarity here to the contrast made between extensive and intensive approaches discussed by Sayer (1984:220) in chapter 3. Broad notional categories may be helpful to enable us to make some comparisons between the figures for organisations in similar organisational environments. However drawing implications that there may be a simple linkage between voluntary income and organisational independence is problematic. The implications of voluntary income for the independence of any specific

organisation needs to be understood by reference to crucial local detail. I will suggest that some measure of financial independence, while important, is not enough. There may not always be a direct correlation with reproducing organisational values.

The second point concerns the way these figures can be useful in offering broad comparisons between organisations. The figures do suggest **these organisations can be classified as largely operating in the quasi-markets of the public sector**. There are, of course finer market distinctions that could be made. We might construe there to be grants and fundraising markets in which charities compete for grants from certain charitable foundations (Taylor 1990:37). It cannot be denied that organisations may be operating in a range of markets. Shelter is a good example here. It provides training and publications for a fee to other organisations in the homelessness field. Like other charities it sells charity greetings cards to the public. It bids competitively for government contracts. These can all be described as markets. All of the three organisations studied had income from varying sources. My argument at this stage is that in their core work, and with their core values, **these organisations are orientated to the public rather than the private sector**. The delivery of housing advice to poor people, the provision of innovative activities for disadvantaged children, the support for rough sleepers, are all located within the public realm. These are not commercially profitable activities. Social economy organisations such as these enact their social progress values in an arena more associated with the public than the private sector. In that sense these three organisations can be broadly distinguished from organisations operating quite directly in commercial markets. The important question for this study is the nature of any constraints on the reproduction of their values which might arise from this specific orientation.

6.2.4 How Contracts Affected Organisational Values

Simple distinctions between grants and contracts are not easy to make. How can we distinguish an extensive service level agreement accompanying an SRB *grant* award from a central government *contract* to deliver services to homeless people? Rather than seeing a clear division between 'grants' and 'contracts' we may be better to imagine a continuum of levels of constraint imposed by different funding bodies and their programmes. In recent research one in five voluntary organisations in the housing field cited contracts as 'very constraining' while in the community development and poverty fields no organisations identified them as constraining (Gribben, Robb and Wilding, NCVO 2002:5). My suggestion here is that contracts are themselves not a homogeneous entity and nor are the effects arising from them.

What was the effect of state contracts on the values of the three quasi-market

organisations? The argument here is that in all three organisations **contracts had constraining effects** and sometimes resulted in a **shift in core organisational values**. This was most marked in the Housing Services Department at Shelter with the contracts for delivery of housing advice. Here there were strong claims that core values such as providing housing advice to all in need had been severely threatened in day-to-day practise. Similar pressures were reported, but better resisted, at St Mungo's and Ormiston. At St Mungo's the outreach teams, Cats, were highly monitored and they were sometimes asked to account for individual rough sleepers. At Ormiston social services attempted to see the centres as places where families would be referred rather than introduced. The latter contains a voluntaristic notion crucial to Ormiston's values. Form filling, which included judging where project users fitted within a model of need, threatened the organisation's non-judgemental values towards families.

At Shelter and St Mungo's contracts specified internal organisational processes as well as outcomes. At Shelter, for example, a thick A4 manual produced by the Legal Services Commission (LSC) specified a standard set of management procedures that all agencies, from solicitors to voluntary organisations, had to adopt as part of the contract. These processes were then audited by the LSC. These descriptions fit well with the tendencies to coercive isomorphism suggested by institutional theory (DiMaggio and Powell 1991:67). Here the contractee (the LSC) had acted as a regulatory regime to impose a homogeneity on both output and internal processes. Although Shelter, as we saw, can claim by far the highest degree of voluntary income of the quasi-market organisations this has not enabled the organisation to avoid a shift in values in one of its departments. In this sense this part of Shelter's operation seems to have been open to the environment with its boundaries highly 'permeable' (Jeavons 1994:64).

Nevertheless the affect of such processes was not uniform. At St Mungo's, which had the lowest voluntary income of the three, the emphasis was on continual negotiation with the contractee, maintaining their own independent information systems, and the focus on the client group seemed highly maintained. St Mungo's appears from the figures to have a high dependence on state income, however it operated with some measure of independence in terms of its values: sticking doggedly to how it saw the needs of the client group. At Ormiston senior managers maintained a critical stance towards contracting processes. For example they suggested alternative processes such as undertaking an evaluation to measure outcomes rather than adopting a model suggested by social services. They maintained a highly vigilant stance towards spotting these processes and the highly integrated structure seemed to allow this to happen rapidly. By being a small organisation, with good trust and communications, they were able to remain alert to unwanted adaptations

from environmental influences. The institutionalist account does not account well for the way that local characteristics of organisations and particular leaders and staff groups may innovate to resist such incursions.

These findings underline the points made at the start of this section concerning voluntary income. Taking the figures of voluntary income at face value Shelter might be thought of as the most independent, and St Mungo's as the most highly constrained, of organisations. It might then be anticipated there would be a corresponding impact on their respective abilities to reproduce their values. However, organisations do have some capacities to resist unwanted pressures from their environment due to the 'contextual factors operating in their case' (Pawson and Tilley 1998:28). The different leader, a local circumstance and their own organisational expertise in a given field of work, which may be highly prized, may all account for different outcomes to the same environmental pressures. Different people in authority may react differently to the same objective demands from the environment (Silverman 1980:70-71). An observation here is that Shelter appeared less integrated than St Mungo's which may have meant negotiating processes at Shelter with the contractee, the LSC, appeared more distant from influence by the practitioners undertaking the contracts. Finally organisational size, while important (see Child 1977:16), cannot alone be seen as accounting for the differences between these organisations. Ormiston is one fifth of the size of Shelter and does not have such sharply divided departments. Yet while Shelter and St Mungo's are of equivalent size, St Mungo's has resisted incursion more fully. Size alone then cannot be totally determining or taken alone account for the differences in value reproduction found in this study.

The three findings in this section for the quasi-market organisations (QMO) are:

F1 (QMO). Contracts had a highly constraining effects on organisational values for these social economy organisations. In one case they led to a shift in core values.

F2 (QMO). The claim of a high degree of voluntary income did not make one of the social economy organisations immune to a values shift due to contracting processes.

F3 (QMO). Contracts were not totally determining of these social economy organisations' ability to reproduce their values, even where an organisation cited a low level of voluntary income.

6.2.5 Features of Organisations

In Ormiston there was a tendency to insulate some periphery parts of the organisation. This was not reported to be a deliberate process and it was described as an

outcome of particular funding mechanisms. For example, partnership projects and short term pieces of work with a single worker can result in such work having a semi-detached status in relation to the core of the organisation. This internal differentiation within organisations, both structural and attitudinal, in response to environment pressures has been well noted (Lawrence and Lorsch 1967:11;38). The implication drawn here is that this could be a method employed by organisations which are operating in a constrained or hostile funding environment. The centre maintains the core values while the periphery parts are kept at arms length. The analogy here would be to the compartmentalising bulkheads in a ship. If one department, or project, of an organisation becomes 'flooded' with divergent unwanted values due to a funding mechanism then the rest of the organisation does not need to be overly affected. An example of this phenomenon is mentioned in passing by Stryjan where he cites the plywood co-operatives in the United States. Foremen are recruited internally and are small in number. However managers whose tasks involve a strong external focus are recruited from outside the organisation. They are given wide discretion but are not drawn into the organisation 'so as to minimise their influence on internal affairs' (Stryjan 1989:110).

There were also indications of this phenomenon of insulation at Shelter albeit without conscious intent. I questioned one of the senior staff on this point. It seemed quite possible that the organisation could at a future date discontinue a great deal of the housing advice delivered under contract with no adverse affect to the core. Again my respondent was puzzled by my suggestion. I do not conclude that this was a deliberate strategy in either organisation. It also does not seem, at first sight, very fulfilling for staff who are designated as 'on the periphery' although as an explicit process it could have benefits for staff who prefer such a location. It seems more likely to have been an emergent phenomenon. This seems particularly likely at Ormiston where there was a high emphasis in the organisational culture on integration. The difficulty there was that small partnership projects did not have the staff capacity to engage with the integrating mechanisms - they remained somewhat on the edge due to their limited funding. This observation concerning organisational insulation is cited because it could be a strategy that in some circumstances organisations might want to adopt explicitly to maintain values in a hostile environment.

What were the differences between St Mungo's and Shelter? Why did one department in Shelter become drawn from organisational values that were still held strongly by many organisational actors? On the other hand why did St Mungo's seem more agile in a contracting climate which had very similar characteristics?

Differing organisational cultures may be an important consideration here in considering the features of these organisations. The 'scruffy', 'gritty', 'working class' side

of St Mungo's was accompanied by managers who did not stand on ceremony even at the most senior levels. High levels of internal promotion meant senior staff understood the pressures face-to-face staff experienced. In the case study description in chapter 4 it was suggested that St Mungo's was not organisationally 'gentrified.' At Ormiston, it was suggested, there was a highly professional ethic of doing things the right way, there was a congruence between the way managers behaved towards staff and the way staff behaved to project users, throughout there was an emphasis on a caring and supportive attitude. Some felt the organisation diffused conflicts - open rows were rare. At Shelter there was, according to the senior managers, a more 'middle class', 'younger' staff profile but staff could be confrontative, especially at head office. However, integration at Shelter, was poorer than at either Ormiston, where this was a formally organised, or at St Mungo's, where informal processes seemed more important. This is returned to in the implications section below.

There is another factor to do with the features of the organisations that should be noted here. St Mungo's had a particular expertise in a niche field with a rare expertise: working with rough sleepers. Others who had been associated with this field in the past, for example, the Salvation Army, were not selected for contracts and gained no toehold in this particular public sector market. St Mungo's is highly specialised in this field and there are relatively few organisations with the same level of expertise and understanding of this issue. They have, in their chief executive's words, stuck with loyalty and some tenacity to this very disadvantaged group. Indeed St Mungo's managers were aware of this position of expertise and were cautious of the way the contracting processes had been set up in this respect. The process first forced them to compete with other organisations. It then asked the successful organisations to share information, expertise and good practise in what seems a studied attempt to engender some mimetic isomorphism (Di Maggio and Powell 1991:69) At the next competitive round, they feared this could endanger St Mungo's expert advantage. This may not in reality be a major threat - it has been pointed out that incumbent organisations in contracting relations tend to have a knowledge monopoly which favours them in future rounds (Macintosh 1998:229; Taylor 1990:39). My argument here is that this points to their awareness of themselves as having a particular specialism with rough sleepers that not many other organisations possess.

Shelter may face competition from many other organisations that could deliver housing advice. Although at present it felt that there were not many other organisations that could take on this level of work this may not be a permanent situation. A wide range of organisations are currently doing housing advice - from Citizen's Advice Bureau to solicitors. Shelter's expert position may be less secure, the skills it is offering may be

available in many other organisations. The issue of rarity of expertise is not the only or even the most decisive factor of difference between Shelter and St Mungo's but it is one difference that needs noting here.

The findings here are that:

F4 (QMO). Social economy organisations may adopt processes of organisational insulation to resist the incursion of unwanted values from the environment.

F5 (QMO). An unique or rare expertise in a particular area of work may be an advantage for a social economy organisation in enabling it to reproduce its organisational values by giving it leverage against invasive affects from contracting processes.

6.2.6 Processes and Practises

One problem for Shelter in the Housing Services Department seems to have been a rapid expansion in housing advice services funded by the LSC. In some cases these advice centres were very small outposts. Thus the proportion of LSC funding in each centre could be high and the associated influence was large. There were few 'slack' resources (Child 1977:15). Shelter did not seem to have developed its own strong management processes so in some cases the imposed systems were welcomed as an improvement. The difficulty of operating two management systems in any one centre seems to have led, understandably, to the LSC systems' domination to a far greater extent than their net contribution to the organisation would suggest. Another outcome of the new managerial culture was displacement of the regional campaigning. Targets for service delivery were highly prescribed by the LSC and closely audited while Shelter had no targets, at regional level, for campaigning work. The outcome appears to have been to draw the attention of the regional advice centres towards the imperatives of service delivery targets.

My argument here is that a **particular vigilance** is required for values reproduction. In fast changing environments as Lawrence and Lorsch (1967:96-7) pointed out a higher degree of differentiation may be necessary. Decision making needed to be possible at lower organisational levels. Social economy organisations are usually operating in environments where policy and practice is changing rapidly. Further, as we saw at Ormiston, quite small decisions taken by staff, on whether or how to complete monitoring forms, could have important implications for the organisational core about how far values were drifting. Local staff needed to be highly aware of Ormiston's values either tacitly or explicitly and to apply these in local contexts. Written values that will apply for all time seem unlikely. What may be the case is what one of the Ormiston staff referred to when

she called for the need for new applications of these values to account for new social situations.

At Ormiston this was tackled by many task groups and cross cutting mechanisms but more subtly by the modelling processes which sought to imbue some tacit understandings of the process values. In a geographically dispersed arena with thematically divergent projects they had worked to create structures with important integrating affects. It seems likely that these processes aided them in remaining alert to unwanted values incursions.

Value carriers was a term I coined to name particular key people who played a significant role in being guardians or advocates of organisational values. Such value carriers seem to be particularly strongly embedded in the organisational culture at Ormiston. If we accept that there is not one organisational culture, and not one set of agreed values, as was discussed in chapter 3, we should realise that value carriers may clash and there will be inevitable conflicts. At Ormiston such value carriers were seen as people who took a particular extra interest in the core beliefs, they may have acted tacitly through their practice but more often they were consciously articulating the values in contest with others in and outside the organisation. This was seen most notably with the discussions in the prison visitor centre between Robert and prison staff on the status of visits to parents. It was also evident in discussions at the equal opportunities group where making the values real and integrating them into the tacit routine of the organisation was a critical task. These are people who can help to do the sensemaking in situations, especially where they notice a 'surprise' - a something divergent where values are an important consideration (Weick 1995).

At Shelter there was no shortage of value carriers. This shows that even with strong value carriers these may not be enough alone to enable values to be reproduced. The organisational structures and in this case the invasive affects of the contracting process could not be resisted. The argument here is that value carriers may be a necessary condition but are certainly not a sufficient condition to enable value reproduction to take place.

F6 (QMO) Particular vigilance and organisational processes were required to enable these social economy organisations to reproduce their organisational values, especially in highly constraining funding environments.

F7 (QMO) Value carriers played an important role in helping these social economy organisations reproduce their organisational values.

F8 (QMO) The presence of value carriers alone was not a sufficient condition to ensure value reproduction.

6.2.7 Summary Remarks on Quasi-Market organisations and Values Reproduction

In this section factors that may have had a strong influence on values reproduction are pulled together. My approach here draws from Pawson and Tilley (1998:57). With their research on crime they consider a range of explanatory mechanisms but also list some of the limiting contexts which may apply. The following points are made to avoid stripping the organisations of important contextual information which may affect their value reproduction processes.

The presence of long term staff, particularly senior staff was a notable feature at Ormiston and St Mungo's. Some of the staff at St Mungo's had been in post 20 years and the Personnel Director commented on the very high degree of internal promotion. St Mungo's was the kind of organisation where staff came and 'made their home' in the words of one respondent at St Mungo's.

Informal processes and ways of meeting were notable at St Mungo's. These seemed less developed in Shelter particularly in the regions. Geographical distance may have played a role here. However, the lack of such processes was not balanced, as at Ormiston, by cross-linking groups and regular training. The combinations of these deficiencies at Shelter may have contributed to the way that value carriers were not able to effectively affect the organisational agenda.

Social movements played a less direct role than expected in these organisations. At St Mungo's some of the homelessness movements were found to be unhelpful and needed to be resisted as they were felt to not support the interests of chaotic street homeless people. Social movements were not unimportant but their effects were not strongly manifested in these organisations in a way that could be easily detected during the period of the study. The focus on race issues at Ormiston is an interesting example here. This issue may have entered the organisation through peer professional practice (there were regional conferences on the theme), through concerns and awareness of engaged staff within the equal opportunities group (there was some evidence of this), or as a response to media reports on asylum seekers (an issue with which Ormiston was concerned about). There is not sufficient evidence to offer more than this speculation at present.

I introduced the term **external advocates** to cover the role of people who may play unofficial and external support roles to organisations. I uncovered this tendency at CAT and then looked for this in the other organisations. There were indications of how these might play a role but this would need to be a subject of separate more detailed research.

Protective membership strategies were noticeable at St Mungo's with the

oligarchic structure of the Friendly Society. This offered a protective membership structure to avoid entry of those not committed to the central focus of the severely disadvantaged street homeless. This was a similar process to that of some of the organisations discussed in the next section, such as Coin Street. Related to membership is the way that all of the organisations had **professionalised systems** for recruitment selection and induction. The key stakeholders were carefully chosen and Shelter claimed all posts had the requirement to campaign built into their job descriptions symbolising the importance of these values.

At Ormiston there was good evidence of the way that **tacit values** were embedded in the child care practice. Training and modelling by managers and frequent discussion opportunities through cross-linking groups played an important role here.

For small groups like BUDD the **people processes** are essential - they are virtually the only resource such organisations can count on. The use of networks and the drawing in of gifts in kind and professional skills is a key part of social movement theory (Diani 1992:2-5). With increasing **organisational size** tendencies to bureaucracy and concentration on organisational routines are likely to increase and a breaking of organisations into small units has been suggested (Child 1977:211). All the organisations studied in this section had small bases and projects. At Shelter there was however a large central base compared to either St Mungo's or Ormiston. This is understandable to some extent in that central campaigning education and fundraising functions were undertaken centrally. The result may have been to make influence harder from the regions. In effect there is one very large entity at headquarters comprising several departments and at some distance are very many small geographically dispersed satellites. In an organisation like Shelter there might need to be more organisational and regional structures due to the distances between projects in Housing Services. The organisational spaces to meet, the '**topos**' (Blomqvist 1998) may have needed reinforcing in Shelter to encourage places where values debates and contestation could take place. However these might have needed to be accompanied by access to regional decision making processes or more national cross-linking structures where influence could be exercised.

6.3 The Market Organisations

6.3.1 Constraints: income sources

Coin Street, CAT and Infinity were studied as organisations operating in commercial markets. Figure 6.2 shows the sources of income for the three organisations. The relative amounts they received from voluntary sources, statutory sources and from sales and services was examined. It was difficult to obtain detailed figures or estimates from

the Coin Street Group. This was due to the highly complex nature of the Group as a federation of organisations so that figures are not available in the form required without some extensive work on their part. Such setbacks can be seen as irritants to a researcher but they can be opportunities for new insights. The problem arises from the way that Coin Street operates across private, public and charitable sectors with a federation of organisations all with different structures and boards. These organisations are accountable to a different set of regulatory boards including companies house, the charity commission and the Financial Services Authority. There is no public annual report for the Coin Street Group.

My final phone plea for a rough breakdown of income for a typical year between commercial, statutory, and charitable income across the group met with a puzzled sigh. There is no typical year because amounts vary so widely. In a year when a new housing development is occurring there may, for example, be a sudden increase in income from the Housing Corporation to the Coin Street Secondary (the Housing Association). Commercial income may drop temporarily due to the loss of car parking space. The nature of the development phases means that figures for any one year would be misleading and they were not aggregated easily in the way required here. While this was disappointing it was

Figure 6.2: Market organisations' sources of income analysed by amounts and percentages			
6.1 (a) Income sources by amount			
Year ending:	CSCB (1) 2000	CAT (2) 2000	Infinity(3) 2000
	£ m	£m	£m
Total income:	2.6	1.1	7.6
Voluntary income	-	0.36	0
Other grants (1):	-	0	0
Statutory income:	-	0	0
Sales:	2.6	0.74	7.6
Other:	-	0	0
6.1 (b) Income sources by percentage			
Voluntary income:	-	33%	-
State income:	-	-	-
Sales and services:	-	66%	100%
This table should be read in conjunction with the text.			

illustrative of an 'impossible organisation' (Stryjan 1989) and I have not been the first to be confounded by an organisation that does not resemble other organisations. Internally staff work across the boundaries of Coin Street Community Builders, Coin Street Secondary, South Bank Management Services, Coin Street Festival as well as the other parts of the extended family of Coin Street organisational family. However outwardly for accounting purposes the 'organisation' is a series of small separate entities some of which have wildly fluctuating incomes. Any 'ballpark figure' would have been misleading and was not readily available.

A reference to Coin Street Community Builders (CSCB), a private company limited by guarantee was however available, in a compendium of UK companies (Dun and Bradstreet 2000) which for 1998 gives the organisation total sales as £2.6m, a net worth of £8m and a total profit of £156,000. This last figure I deduce to be the commercial surplus funds for the development arm of the organisation, CSCB. Apart from this the reader will have to be content with the knowledge that Coin Street Group does in some years gain income from the Housing Corporation, Single Regeneration Budget and from charitable trusts for some of the smaller community based work as well as commercial income from rents and car parking and selling advertising space. From this I can only assert that Coin Street Group does gain income from all three sectors.

CAT and Infinity were by comparison straight forward. Infinity as worker co-operative operates exclusively in the commercial sector and had sales of £7.6m in 2000 across the warehouse, shop, cafe and bakery. CAT's income comes one third from charitable sources (£384,000) and two thirds from commercial income (734,000). On the charitable side the main items of income were: 30% from donations, 25% from educational courses and cabins on site, 12% from grants and other donations, with 10% from the supporters association, and 10% from sales of publications. On the commercial side over 60% of income is from sales and 36% from admissions.

There is one further qualification to offer here. CAT's income of £91,000 from cabins and courses is charitable income. Yet there is a classification issue here which is similar to how we should classify the income from Shelter's charitable shops in the earlier part of this chapter. At CAT, legally, 'courses income' is charitable, yet, in terms of the organising form, it resembles a commercial market operation. Again this illustrates that financial figures labelled 'charitable' can conceal significant features of the operating reality.

6.3.2 Implications of Figures on Income Sources

These figures do illustrate that all three of these social economy organisations are operating in commercial markets. Infinity's total income is from sales, CAT

receives two thirds of income from commercial sources and the Coin Street Group, which remains an enigma at present, did receive £2.6m of commercial income in 1998.

6.3.3 How Commercial Income Affected Organisational Values

I now want to consider if the location of these organisations in commercial markets necessarily inhibited the reproduction of their values.

My broad assessment from the research at Infinity was that the organisation did reproduce its **product values** concerned with organic wholefoods although there was, for example, an increasing tendency to sell convenience foods. There was a big investment in activities devoted to reproducing these values. Infinity also did reproduce its co-operative **process values** however there was relatively little investment in these processes and they were weak. This was not dissimilar to the comments by, Fred Freundlich, our guide at Mondragon, quoted in chapter 1, section 3.3 who found that many members were firstly interested in the economic side of the organisation. Respondents at Infinity also admitted it was harder to maintain those co-operative values. My own assessment here was that these co-operative values were not so heavily invested in. There were no group training days, few outside socials and few individual opportunities for learning or developing skills in this arena. Even the official business meetings were held at the end of the 'working day' suggesting perhaps that meetings were not seen so much as part of 'the work' despite the fact that members were paid for attendance.

There are a number of points to make here. At one level this is a manifestation of the **degeneration argument** - that the economic side of the business becomes the primary goal and democratic working methods wither (Meister 1984). There is some weight to this argument but it is not a full description. Meister's framework suggests a move to professionalism over collectivism as the first step to decline. What appears to have happened at Infinity is that collectivism is still espoused and acted out although there are pressures to professionalise. If professionalism has been happening then it has been occurring discretely perhaps through a hidden hierarchy. Meanwhile in the absence of very effective structures some power seems to have passed to informal groups.

There is also another level to the argument. Co-operative values may be less tangible than product values and harder to cultivate. They challenge many conventional ways of working and are not necessarily reinforced by other actors in the organisational environment. It is tempting to argue as follows. Poor reproduction of product values around wholefoods could have immediate effects on the credibility of the organisation - and failure to follow them might have painful economic consequences. Therefore, members will be more immediately attentive to these product values. This is a tempting but false

argument because it is also true for a co-operative that the poor reproduction of process values could have enormous implications. For example, recruitment of wrong staff, lack of ability to challenge poor performance, poor decision making over a new investment, could all have critical results. If some members feel hurt and frustrated and leave new members may take some time to learn the co-operative skills and this is a drain on the productive resources of the members.

Infinity operates in a niche market where **product values** around wholefoods are sustained by a customer base. As one respondent argued, taking a stand on values grounds against GM foods enhances Infinity's standing in this market - it is good for values and good for business. The market here is not antagonistic to Infinity's values. The reverse was the case for the Oxford Swindon and Gloucester co-operative society which, operating in a more mainstream market, wanted to stock organic and fair traded goods but received little uptake in certain stores. It wanted to take a stance but was 'let down by the customers.'

Good economic performance by Infinity may enable it to maintain the co-operative values because economic success may be the condition for the co-operative: without a business there will be no co-operative. The market, however, does not appear to reinforce the co-operative values directly in the way that it does the product values.

At CAT, this argument is put differently. They assert that there is no point in the commercial enterprise apart from supporting their goals and mission. However this commercial income is important for they believe the organisation could not have survived long without the income supplied by the commercial operation of a visitor's centre.

Coin Street gains its core funding from commercial income but also operates in public sector markets. They assert that they would not have been able to provide the housing, employment and environmental improvements had they been dependent on local authority support. State support is seen as having more ideological attachments which can act as a tension to their product values. With the example of Site A they had to work creatively to find a solution that would meet the needs of people with low incomes in housing need which remained the board's value commitment. They also had to satisfy differing pressures from three sectors. The commercial lenders required a higher return than Coin Street could offer. The local state had requirements to house families. A government quango also had requirements concerning type of housing stock that could be supported. Here, unlike Infinity and CAT, Coin Street was working across both kinds of markets in order to maintain the organisational value of providing homes for people on low incomes.

This kind of example provides a useful insight into those two differing market pressures. From the commercial side the imperatives were to be convinced that the loan risk would be minimised by seeing an asset that would be worth about a 30% proportion of

the loan. From the state side the imperatives were more ideologically laden with policy and value imperatives: requirements to build larger housing units than Coin Street deemed appropriate for the site.

What is clear here in all three cases is that the commercial markets are not *necessarily* constraining in values terms for the kinds of products these organisations were engaged in delivering. Judgments by mainstream banks on lending money to Coin Street for housing developments are more based on financial considerations of risk and returns than on the social desirability or not of the project. Visitors to CAT may be committed to the ideals of low energy and sustainable solutions but they also require a good day out for their entrance fee. Similarly shoppers at Infinity may be highly committed to what they see the shop standing for, but like visitors to CAT they are concerned with a quality, as well as an ethical, product.

The findings here for the market organisations (MO) are that:

F9 (MO). These social economy organisations did not find that operating in commercial markets necessarily constrained their product values.

F10 (MO). One social economy organisations did, however, face pressure in trying to reproduce internal process values (such as co-operative working) .

F11 (MO). Two social economy organisations operating in commercial markets reported less ideological constraint to pursuing their values than they experienced in public sector markets.

6.3.4 Features of Organisations

One characteristic of organisations like Infinity and CAT is that they have over time been able to create their own niche markets. They are operating with products in particular niche markets associated with a social movement that is high profile. This niche market in turn supports their values. We cannot postulate that the path would be easy for value based organisations operating with products in more mainstream markets, let us say selling washing machines. This latter situation is exactly that faced by the Mondragon worker co-operatives and the UK consumer co-operatives such as Lincoln and OSG. These latter organisations must compete head-to-head with commercial operators who may have greater economies of scale but nearly identical products. One strategy here might be in 'asserting the co-operative advantage' (Spear 2000) positioning the organisation as having a good and ethical product (as done successfully by the UK Co-operative Bank).

The finding here was that:

F12 (MO). Particular social economy organisations may be able to play a part in creating their own market niches. These markets may in turn support some of the core organisational values.

6.3.5 Processes and Practises

At Infinity there were processes of recruitment from friends and customers, a phenomenon noted by earlier writers (Rotshchild-Whitt 1982:30) At CAT there was careful recruitment accompanied by follow up induction and mentoring processes. At Coin Street there was a deliberate oligarchy at board level which had been established to prevent entryism by sectional interests. Confirmation was found in the study of such careful protected entry systems which were seen to act as supports for value reproduction..

The finding here is that:

F13 (MO). A variety of protective entry strategies, either at staff or board level, had been adopted for these social economy organisations.

As with the quasi-market organisations there were long standing people committed to these organisations. At CAT some of the founders were still present some 25 years later. A similar pattern was found at Coin Street where such founders were still present either as staff or on the board. There were several very long standing members at Infinity who had been there for over 20 years.

The finding here is that:

F14 (MO) Long serving members and founders were a feature of all of these social economy organisations.

There were value carriers at CAT, Infinity and Coin Street. At CAT these were often founders and long standing staff members. Certain departments were deemed more central to the values than others. For example, in the Consultancy Department, workers would be deemed to have a more conscious articulation of the values than in the restaurant. At Coin Street long standing members of the board, established staff and those associated with the group for many years could be identified as value carriers. At Infinity, Mark who had to make crucial decisions on ordering stock, was one of the first to raise the issue of GM foods. A former staff member was a value carrier and advocate against food supplements. Debbie also pointed out how, at Infinity, different workers may take more of a lead on different Infinity values. The finding here is as follows.

F15 (MO) Value carriers played an important role in helping these social economy organisations reproduce their organisational values.

CAT had invested heavily in organisational structures, including mentoring processes, these provided places where staff could process their understandings of the organisation. The example of volunteers and the GM incident shows how even quite new and junior recruits could gain access to the organisational decision making.

F16 (MO) Access to organisational decision making structure at CAT played an important role in enabling values debates to be raised and decided upon.

The idea of 'topos' or 'baa' - organisational spaces where values debates might take place - was noted at CAT. Some of these spaces were though socialising in Tea Chest or in the evenings locally. At Coin Street there was a developed social network. Within Infinity informal discussion during the working day between small groups was considered a vital part of understanding and discussing organisational decisions.

F17 (MO) Organisational spaces ('topos') were found to be an important condition in enabling value reproduction.

A social movement was found to act like a support and a challenge to organisational values. At CAT and Infinity this was seen most vividly. At CAT volunteers were able to enter the organisation through a regular series of short placements. Activists in urban environmental issues were able to confront the organisation on an issue of sponsorship from a company involved in GM foods and contest these values. At Infinity GM foods provided a similar issue where environmental groups' concerns entered the organisation.

F18 (MO) A supportive social movement close to the organisation can help reproduce organisational values if it can permeate the organisation.

6.3.6 Summary Remarks on Market Organisations

Some additional points which are relevant as contextual points are included here. It need pointing out that all of the organisations studied here were 'deviant' organisations in the kindly sense that Stryjan (1989:97) intends. In the minor case study of the co-operative societies it was noted that a high degree of income security may itself be unhelpful to values regeneration. In that case the organisation 'went to sleep' and nearly lost sight of their membership basis. These also showed examples where **regeneration** of organisational values was possible, for example at Oxford Swindon and Gloucester Society

(OSG). OSG provided good example of a commercial value based organisation that had virtually lost its value base and yet had worked to reinvigorate its values: **degeneration** was not inevitable here despite the location in commercial markets.

External advocates were notably present at CAT, Coin Street and Infinity. Again the full import of these extra-organisational actors remains under-researched. Organisations like CAT amounted to **lifestyle** organisations where for many of the staff, work and personal life were intermingled.

So far in this discussion there may have been a bias towards considering the maintenance of existing values rather than being aware of applying them to new situations. The issue of vitamin supplements at Infinity provided an interesting example of **values transformation** albeit on something that was perhaps a sub-value within the organisation.

6.4 General Comments

The findings in this chapter need to be considered within the structure/agency debate of Giddens (1984). Much of the discussion has focussed on **agency** factors. The examination has considered what organisational actors might do within and around their organisation in order to reproduce their values. There are of course, many features of organisational life that are not accessible to actor influence. Any actor strategies may not alone be sufficient to reproduce organisational values in the face of extreme events in turbulent environments. These are many issues, particularly issues of **structure** concerned, for example, with social changes and the operation of markets, which are not easy to influence and will be beyond the control of the organisation. Even though we have seen ways in which organisations can work to create niche markets around their activities (Infinity and CAT for example) we cannot assume such work is always intentional or feasible.

An important question for this study, particularly for practitioners, is which agency factors might organisational actors be able to influence? Drawing together some of the findings across both sets of organisations a specification is suggested which may form part of the gestalt of values reproduction from an agency perspective. Learning from Stryjan's schema on membership reproduction in Chapter 2) it is suggested that a triple cocktail for values reproduction will involve value carriers, organisational spaces and access to decision making. This schema, developed further in the next chapter, is that:

F19. Values reproduction may require a triple cocktail (a) Key value carriers, with (b) sufficient organisational spaces for values debate and discussion to take place (either formally or informally) and (c) access to influencing or

decision making processes.

In concluding this chapter it should be noted that most of the organisations studied here were unusual organisations and in some cases almost unique. As Langrish (1993) and Yin (1994) have pointed out there is some strength and interest in the revelatory case. We should however be wary of assuming findings from these organisations can necessarily apply to very different organisations without considering their local contextual factors (Pawson and Tilley 1998). Nevertheless some of the findings here can have some general implications for our thinking and theorising about social economy organisations and these are discussions that are taken forward in the final chapter.

Chapter 7:

Conclusions

In this final chapter the starting points of this study are revisited: how do quality social economy organisations reproduce their organisational values? This is explored by considering how far the findings can inform organisational thinking. Firstly, the arguments concerning the **constraints** markets may place on organisations reproducing their values are examined. Secondly, the importance **organisational features, strategies and processes play in reproducing values** is considered from institutional and organisational culture perspectives. Thirdly, the discussion is completed with an initial **schema** to consider **values reproduction**. The chapter concludes with some **reflections on organisational values**.

7.1 Trouble with Markets?

A broad distinction has been used in this study between public and private sector markets. It is often claimed that both can cause trouble for social economy organisations' goals, values and distinctive character. In this section some of these arguments are examined by discussing how the thinking of some of the authors cited in the first two chapters illuminates the organisations studied.

7.1.1 Commercial Markets and Values: friend or foe?

Recent discussions in the US usefully illuminate the debate about how both private and public sector markets may affect social economy organisations. These debates contain both an optimistic and a pessimistic account. Rosenman (2000) suggested that value-based organisations in the USA faced a process of 'morphing into the market' under pressures to commercialise. This process was seen to threaten the distinctiveness of value-based organisations by shifting the nature of voluntary organisations' work. From striving for 'collective benefits' for the greater good (let us say advocacy on behalf of clients or proposing social improvements) they were moving to becoming a deliverer of 'individual goods' that resembled any other product (Rosenman 2000:6). Other US writers however found not-for-profits were increasingly looking to commercial income so as to provide

more guaranteed income streams which were 'easier to grow and more resilient than philanthropic funding' and which constituted 'more reliable funding sources than donations or grants' (Dees 1998:56). Organisational values of social economy organisations may then variously be seen to be threatened or enhanced by commercial operations. I believe both Rosenman and Dees' theses are partially supported but for different kinds of organisations in different kinds of environments.

The South Shore Bank (Grzywinski 1991) is an example of a community development initiative with its own assets undertaking long term work which was not subject to the vagaries and short term priorities of grant regimes. The founders there saw a convenient marriage between social and business objectives in an initiative which resembles the work at Coin Street. With organisations like CAT and Coin Street, which are necessarily more engaged in commercial markets, there is no 'morphing' taking place. Both of these organisations have chosen to operate close to such markets consistently for a period approaching 25 years. CAT and Coin Street, and most clearly Infinity, have values associated with products which are amenable to commercial operations. They have successfully colonised this organisational environment over a period of time and their **product values** are not necessarily in opposition to that environment. For example we could imagine a fair trade Cappuccino street seller finding a commercial niche, between Starbucks and Joe's coffee van, where the fair trade values are not necessarily endangered simply by commercial operation. For organisations with such product values Dees' argument on income stability from commercial markets may be supported.

7.1.2 Commercial Income: affect on product and process values

What is not so clear is to what degree process values, for example co-operative working, are threatened by a location in commercial markets. One formulation of this dilemma is the **goal degeneration** thesis. On this account 'decisions will be dominated by the needs of the market and the necessity of making a profit' (Cornforth, Thomas, Lewis and Spear 1988:122). This may affect both product and process values. At Infinity the location in a niche wholefood market mostly supports their product values on organic foods. Taking a stand on GM food was 'good for business.' The same was not true for Oxford, Swindon and Gloucester Co-operative which was not in such a niche. Even at Infinity there was the tendency to stock more convenience foods which, arguably, indicates some decline from wholefood values. Commercial markets do not necessarily support **product values** but they may do. However what is more problematic is the affect on **process values**. At Infinity there was some evidence that market imperatives did not encourage members to devote time to the development of co-operative working skills. It

was not seen as a priority. Product values were largely privileged over process values. There was a similar tendency reported at Mondragon in chapter 1.

My conclusion is that Dees may be correct for some organisations in some settings. Commercial income at Coin Street enabled it to develop long term regeneration projects with less ideological control and more secure income than was possible with statutory income. This kind of income was, for example, generally more supportive to their **product values** than they had experienced with the local borough.

7.1.3 Different Varieties of Commercial Income

We should also note that Dees describes at least two different kinds of commercial operation. On the one hand some US organisations are raising money through attached operations so organisations such as Save the Children (USA) are selling men's tie pins to spread the mission and raise money for the cause. This might be equivalent to the Christmas gift catalogues produced in the UK by many charitable organisations predominately for fundraising purposes. On the other hand some of these organisations are set to 'commercialise the core programmes through which they accomplish their mission...' by using fees and contracts (Dees 1998:56). Some of this has been though fee-based work for corporations. Sometimes it has been via contracts to run government programmes. At other times this has happened through charging beneficiaries. These latter approaches are likely to penetrate more into those core values associated with service delivery than the former 'tie pin' approaches. It is important then to distinguish what kinds of commercial income are being described. Rosenman's more pessimistic account would seem to be more justified if it were applied to this later kind of marketisation.

7.1.4 The Threat of Morphing into Public Sector Markets

Dees even considers government contracts in the US as 'commercial income' which does not seem appropriate in a UK context. This is the point of the broad distinction upheld in this study between the quasi-market organisations and the commercial market organisations. In the UK context, as was discussed in the last chapter, the orientation of quasi-market organisations is toward the public sector. This is important because this study showed the markedly different ways government contracts operated as compared to commercial income.

It also needs to recognise at this point that a different historical context for social welfare which applies in the USA as compared to the UK. This has particular relevance in the fields of welfare delivery, including homelessness and childcare, in which organisations in this study were engaged. The state role in the UK welfare regime, is certainly construed

differently to that in the USA, with greater state intervention anticipated in the UK (Esping-Anderson 1990). The boundary between the state and third sector may be in the process of being redrawn in the UK (Perri 6 1994). This may mean the *delivery* agent is shifting. However the primary responsibility remains largely with the state rather than with commercial or quasi-market organisations who may be contracted in as providers. A morphing into 'public sector markets' rather than 'commercial' markets may be a greater danger for many not-for-profits in the UK. In this connection it was Rosalind at Ormiston who pointed out the danger for not-for-profits is that they simply become an outreach service for other organisations with their own organisational value base in danger of being occluded.

What seemed problematic for the **voluntary organisations** studied here was the determining nature of their contracts in public sector markets. At Shelter in the Housing Services Department, this affected not just product values concerned with advice delivery but also internal management and organisational processes. This might also be true too for a class of organisations not studied here: social economy organisations with strong process values operating in public sector markets. One example here would be care co-operatives (Spear Leonetti and Thomas 1994). A further example would be organisations like Greenwich Leisure Ltd which is a co-operative which has the franchise to deliver leisure services (Social Enterprise London 1999:33). Here the primary contractual relation is with the state with income dependent on a commercial operation but with internal processes values of co-operative working. A study on the affect contracts had on co-operative values in those settings would provide an additional contrast to the findings of this study.

7.1.5 Decline of Process Values

In the first section in this chapter goal degeneration was implicated. This can be distinguished from **organisational degeneration** whereby 'control may become concentrated in the hands of the few and the form of the organization becomes similar to that adopted by the capitalist companies' (Cornforth, Thomas, Lewis and Spear 1988:114). This contains two ideas: decision making power and organisational form. Here I consider the first point. First we should note that the term 'degeneration' is often talked about more in connection with commercially orientated value-based organisations. However the kind of organisational *decline* due to oligarchic tendencies has been famously described by Michels (1949) and he suggested it would apply in all forms of organisations. He argued that elites tend to arise in participatory organisations which then lose touch with members' interest' in pursuit of their own agendas. There are objections to this pessimistic scenario in that some amount of delegation is necessary in any organisation of reasonable size, yet

this would be still seen as oligarchic in Michels' formulation (Cornforth, Thomas, Lewis and Spear 1988:119).

At Infinity the range of informal processes and the apparent ineffectiveness of many meetings raised the question of whether there is an informal oligarchy operating. As has been pointed out the presence of 'formal rights of control' is not the same as whether that right can be exercised in practice (Cornforth, Thomas, Lewis and Spear 1988:115). There were hints of these processes operating in the deferring to long term or more experienced members. The evidence is not overwhelming. The absence, however, of firm investment in training and support for co-operative working does suggest the reproduction of process values around co-operative working is likely to be weakened. The question would be to what degree alternative oligarchic working processes are, or will be, informally developing behind the co-operative processes.

In this study the oligarchic governance tendency on both St Mungo's and Coin Street's boards was seen as a positive way of protecting the organisational values. This cannot of course be taken for granted and needs to be argued for in each case. However there was some justification for rule by an exclusive group suggested at St Mungo's where an open membership and governance system could work against the interests of their unpopular client group. The danger was that people might join to change the direction of the organisation's values.

7.1.6 Voluntary Organisations and Contracting Culture

Let us now consider the voluntary sector in relation to contracting culture. Garside's (2001) analysis on housing associations, which included examination of the work of Shelter, was skeptical of claims for these organisations' degree of independence and, in an echo of institutional thinking, suggested government partly met its own aims through these organisations, using financial and administrative devices, rather than direct legislative force.

This study showed that voluntary organisations do indeed face severe constraints due to a contracting culture which can affect their ability to reproduce their values. Nevertheless such accounts can imply an overly deterministic account and fail to take into account the operation and affect that mechanisms associated with local 'contextual features' may produce. These might be internal organisational culture or particular leaders or allegiances which might mitigate against the effect of market mechanisms. This kind of analysis may explain some of the effects discussed in the analysis: St Mungo's worked hard to maintain its values in the teeth of a highly determining contract culture, while Shelter seemed unable to do so. This emphasis on local features is emphasised in the work

of certain realist researchers (Pawson and Tilley 1998:28) and is consistent with critical realist thinking (Sayer 2000:13). Here there is suspicion of causality implicated in the simple coincidence of given factors. Rather, in the complex social world we need awareness of multiple causes some of which may be triggered or veiled in specific contexts.

7.1.7 Quasi-Markets Critiqued

It is important to remind ourselves here of the differences between quasi-markets and commercial markets. These two kinds of markets do not operate in analogous ways and so do not have a comparable affect. The notion of quasi-markets as resembling commercial markets has been critiqued with Mackintosh pointing out such markets frequently have only one purchaser which is a local or national state department (Mackintosh 1998:66). The potential providers may also be few. Overall they are markedly different from an idealised version of 'market discipline.' This was backed up by the chief executive at St Mungo's who was dismissive of the idea that these structures resembled commercial markets: there was too much interference from civil servants in outcomes and processes to warrant a comparison.

These processes of competitive tendering by independent contractors for a 'license' to run services formerly in the public sector over a specific time scale have become widespread and they have been compared to franchising operations in the private sector (Mackintosh 1998:227). However the same author suggested some of the changes that a non-profit organisation may face in a environment shifting from grant funding to contracting for services.

In place of an earlier situation where the organization's self perception was that of a 'voluntary' specialist organization, independently complementing statutory provision...it is now a public supplier subject to higher levels of formal functioning.
(Macintosh 1998:238)

She suggested the response of organisations to a greater level of intrusion would depend on: 'the strength of commitment to its clients, and on whether the organisation thinks the new behaviour of the public authority is an aberration from which it will recover.' She cited evidence from Britain which suggested two responses: either the organisation takes on a quasi-public sector role or becomes a more instrumental contracted supplier. Again there was evidence in Shelter of both of these tendencies. She also drew on research from the US which suggested that where not-for-profit and for-profit organisations competed, there tended to be little difference between cost and quality (Macintosh 1998:238). This later finding suggests a growing isomorphism between sectoral

organisations.

Moore (2000) suggests a helpful model to illustrate the difference between quasi and commercial markets. The new public management was concerned with inter-organisational competition and Moore puts forward four roles needed in competitions. There are competitors, rewards, referees, judges. Typically many public service processes, in theory modelled on private sector competition, differ markedly. So private markets have competitors (companies) and rewards (profits) and sometimes referees (we might think of legislation here). However public sector contracting processes also have judges (usually the state or its agents) who assess and decide between the organisations taking part in the bidding.

There are then some significant asymmetries between these two kinds of markets. The measure of state control over quasi-markets is suggestive of a more ideological as well as economic control over participants which may bear on external outcomes and internal processes. Both of these controls may have significant impact on organisational values. However, market causes cannot alone be sufficient causal factors in either sustaining or hampering organisational values although they may be a highly significant constraint. Other causal mechanisms may be operational in local contexts which can enable or disable value reproduction.

7.1.8 Pay and the Growth of Professionalism

One area which has not been discussed is the issue of pay and how this can act as indicator of professionalisation which may impact on values reproduction. Institutional writers have suggested that professionalisation within organisations occurs along with an increasing 'structuration' of the organisational field in which they are operating (DiMaggio and Powell 1991:73). This in turn can lead to a greater isomorphism amongst organisations within that field. An example relevant to this study would be when a government department considers certain organisations to be leaders in a given field. It may reward them with status, funding, or preferential access to consultations. The characteristics of such organisations may then be lauded, often leading others to mimic those attributes. The mechanisms by which these mimicking tendencies occur, DiMaggio and Powell suggest, can be both informal as well as formal. Practitioners, for example, may talk at conferences, in practitioner associations or trade union groups, read journals or newspapers relevant to their field. In this way influential organisations tend to have their policies and structures copied. Such mechanisms can also exert a pressure to recognise certain jobs as specialist, to accord particular qualification routes into work, and to gain appropriate pay and conditions.

There are an increasing number of surveys and reports emerging on pay and

differentials in the sector. Ball (1992:71) found, in a UK trade union survey from 1989, that pay in the voluntary sector was lower than in private and public sectors and that reward structures were flatter. Later surveys by the Reward Group confirmed this trend with the average pay of the voluntary sector workforce reported to be lagging 12% behind that of the rest of the workforce (Zimmeck 1998:20). More recently, the Association of Chief Executives in Voluntary Organisations reported a mean salary of £47,675 in its (now annual) remuneration survey of members in 2001, which it argues is 23% lower than for those in similar roles in the private sector (ACEVO Press Release 27.11.01). Nevertheless, the 2002 survey suggested that for charities with an income of around £50m per year salaries of chief executives tended to coalesce at around £80,000. None of these surveys have, of course, been taken by disinterested parties and the headline figures quoted can tend to aggregate organisations of different sizes and from different fields within the sector. A Society Guardian survey in 2002 examined 450 leading private, public and voluntary organisations (including 100 charities active in fundraising). Chief executives in these larger organisations in the public and voluntary sector averaged £93,680 in 2001-2. One of the biggest charities, The National Trust, paid its most senior staff member the highest salary at £110,000 (Guardian 25.9.2002).

The existence of these surveys, as well as the information they reveal, provides some evidence of a tendency towards an increasingly professional sector that wishes to compare itself to private and public sectors. The salaries for chief executives in the sector represent large sums in gross terms to anyone on average earnings and far exceed those achievable for many users. In addition the salaries of senior staff periodically surface as issues of public debate when large charities advertise for senior staff. It is not, of course, unjust that lower paid workers should argue for better terms, or that higher paid staff argue for parity. What is being suggested here is that in an increasingly professionalised arena wages, and other conditions of service, are quite likely to arise as important components in organisational life, exerting their influence on the organisation. This does not mean professionalised organisations can not hold to their values in the face of such pressures. Rather, these additional forces are the price to be paid for some of the advantages professionalised organisations enjoy.

Within the co-operative movement equal pay, or a low pay differential has often been an espoused value (see Millington, B., Adamantiadi, M., Briscoe, B., and Spear, R. 2000:32). The increasing of differentials is often frowned upon by writers in the field. Douthwaite for example, saw the Mondragon co-operatives 'unfortunately heading in the wrong way' for gradually increasing the ratio between the earnings of the highest to lowest paid to 6 to 1 although he points out the ratio in Spanish industry can be as high as 15 to 1

(Douthwaite 1996:170, 339).

If an organisation's core values 'tend to be those of the of the people exercising power' (Paton 1999:136) it is worth considering what effects arise in more professionalised organisations around values, particularly due to the influence of senior staff, when contrasted to behaviour in less professionalised settings. In this study wage structures were not specifically studied as a dimension of difference between organisations. However, recruitment of chief executives in two of the charities (Shelter and Ormiston) took place during 2002, with advertisements in the national press on professional scales. St Mungo's too had professional scales of pay. The picture was different with two of the organisations operating in more commercial settings. Equal pay was apparent at Infinity (for co-op members) and at CAT (for Permanent Staff Members), in both cases at rates well below national averages.

The notion of 'organisational gentrification,' that was first raised in the discussion on Shelter, has some connections to the debate on the isomorphic pressures faced by professionalising organisations in highly regulated fields. A deeper examination of the interplay of values and professionalised organisations is however beyond the immediate scope of this study.

7.2 Organisational Features, Strategies and Processes

The institutionalists' account tends to privilege the importance of external environments in shaping organisational form while the organisational culture accounts tend to emphasis the internal distinctiveness and divergence within organisations. From a values perspectives both accounts offer some help.

The institutionalist accounts offer an important but partial account for this study. Such theories help us understand the way organisations operate in their environment. This helps us see to how organisational values may be susceptible to influence from a variety of mechanisms such as professional networks, communities of practice, and social movements. These accounts also offer insights into the mechanisms by which funding or regularity regimes can operate on the internal processes of organisations with implications for values.

7.2.1 Limitations of the Institutional Account

Such theories however can tend towards deterministic accounts. Organisations are seen as affected by the environment while the contribution of active human agency is downplayed. This is not to claim that we should return to an atomisitic conception where

an aggregation of rational actors have the power to determine and enact organisational values. This view was critiqued in chapter 2 where it was argued that the emergent properties of organisations may not be fully reducible to the wishes of individual organisational actors. However the notion of 'agency' needs a higher place in any account of organisational values of social economy organisations.

Organisations in similar industrial fields often adopt widely different structures. Silverman (1980) and Zucker (1991) underline the notion of agency by suggesting that different actors respond differently to similar challenges. One suggestion to aid the institutionalist account has been to see the actions of a manager's discretion as being interposed between the organisation and the environment (Martin 1998:305). This is then seen as accounting for the diversity between organisations in similar environments. Other critics have suggested these theories underestimate the degree to which organisations may shape their organisational environment which is not then totally determining.

The leading schools of organisations theory (neo-contingency theory, institutionalism) emphasise, in one way or another, the importance of factors external to the organisation in producing organisations and determining their fate.

(Ackroyd 2000:100)

Ackroyd goes on to suggest that if organisations can be seen as actively constituted by their members and can, in many cases, transform what is external to them, such a view needs changing. Such accounts draw attention, firstly, to the individual characteristics or cultures of organisations which is relevant to the account here. Secondly this discussion is important in considering the way social economy organisations act to shape the world around them.

Firstly, examining organisational culture helps us understand why organisation's may not respond uniformly to very similar constraints. At a most basic level Shelter and St Mungo's had the 'feel' of very different organisations as was shown in chapter 4. One was more 'professionalised,' the other more 'scruffy.' One was more 'middle class,' the other more 'working class.' Many other contrasts could also be suggested to discuss these differences. The point here is that diversity between organisations may not just be structural and there may be particular and unique configurations of peculiar characteristics in different social economy organisations. In part these divergences between organisations may reflect something of the people and of the cause: CAT attracts highly motivated environmental idealists who want to 'save the planet.'

Secondly, organisations such as CAT and Infinity shaped an organisational environment in which they now subsist. This can be seen as a niche market. Arguably they

were part of a **social movement** from the 1970s. Their work subsequently led to a market for their products which did not exist before. In Bourdieu's terms people around the UK may have occupied a particular 'habitus' (having a set of dispositions, interests and commitments for environmental issues). This was then activated in an emerging 'field', the notions of seeking environmental friendly ways to live, environmental tourism, buying eco-friendly products (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1996:16-17). The CAT products (visitor centre, courses, a catalogue) were part of creating a new organisational environment. In Lawrence and Lorsch's (1967) terms they created the products and the market. Another example of where the influence of the environment need not be a one way determining force was suggested by Jack at CAT. Working with industrial organisations to spread best environmental practice could lead to a benchmarking with such companies through communities of practice. This could be a process of attempting to inculcate a mimetic isomorphism amongst industrial organisations.

The phenomenon of influencing of the environment was displayed with equal importance, if less dramatically, at Ormiston and St Mungo's and also at Shelter. There the negotiating work with local or national government was part of managing grants and contracts. They may innovate, for example by modifying the environment as at St Mungo's. Here there were attempts to resist and shape the funders based on their own insight into the problems and needs of rough sleepers.

Another area where the institutionalist's account is less satisfactory is in understanding the reproduction of organisational values is in the cognitive realm. There is a sense in which there is a shaping or 'sense making' that proceeds amongst actors inside organisations (Weick 1995). What needs to be taken account of here is the way organisational actors construe the situations they confront. This construing is often done through their values and ideology. How they act is based on these 'soft' constructions of the world around them.

Social movements are important here too. Operating in the sub-organisational space they can provide the lens by which staff in organisations may sense what is happening around them. The effect of womens' movements in organisations are good examples here. They can provide ways in which organisations invigorate their values by drawing in new understanding from networks that have less institutional constraints on their thinking. They can also remain latent, informing organisational actor's actions, unreferenced, in the background. In that sense they might not always be overt in their affect. This may explain why it was hard to detect overt influences of social movements at Ormiston and Shelter. This could provide the subject for further research.

7.2.2 The Importance of Agency for Organisational Values

For social economy organisations values need application, adjustment and reappraisal in new situations. Organisational actors need to innovate through the processes of contesting and debate. This happened very visibly with volunteers at CAT on GM company sponsorship. This was also witnessed at Infinity where a change occurred to permit the stocking of vitamins. More subtly this occurrence around process values at Ormiston with attempts to make the equal opportunities policy a live policy embedded in daily practise. In all these cases attempts were being made to affirm, adjust or make meaningful organisational values in new situations. Values may then be reproduced through discussions or decisions at these more striking key moments.

This points to the importance of 'agency' within organisational processes around values. Organisational values in social economy organisations often need to be more accessible to cognition as opposed to organisational culture which may be harder to comprehend or delineate. These cognitive approaches to reproducing values may mean the active construction of management process. The integrative cross-working groups at Ormiston were one example here. Participatory group management structures at CAT provide another example of such approaches. It may also require arranging organisational spaces made possible through some organisational 'slack.' Such spaces, or 'Topos', can be places where organisational contests and understandings around values can be developed at a conscious level. Value carriers at Ormiston can be viewed as activists who work particularly at supporting, defending or reinterpreting those values in practise within those organisational spaces.

These processes of debate are not only occurring in formal settings. Boden's (1994) research examined the vital role of talk within organisations though informal processes. Such accounts take in the importance of insights from the human relations school of thinking with its origins in Elton Mayo's work (Schwartzman 1993:11). Such accounts alert us to the way in which the unofficial and informal processes are, most clearly in a worker co-operative like Infinity, also part of the 'official' managing structure too. We should not neglect in this account that contests over values are also contests over power between different individuals and groups within organisations.

However values may not always be so central in organisational life. Much of the time they will form part of the backcloth and be contained tacitly in organisational practise. The routinisation (what was called the 'Ormistonising' in one of the organisations) appears to be part of the process of embedding tacit ways in working life (Nonaka and Takeuchi 1995).

Figure 7.1: Outline Schema Factors Important in Considering the Reproduction of Organisational Values

1. Internal ('agency' factors):

(a) There is a need for a spread of knowledgeable human agents (value carriers) across the organisation. This will be important in any parts of the organisation more crucial for those key values (eg outreach workers in a practice based organisation). There will need to be actors who are consciously aware of the core values and be able to articulate, apply and innovate with them in practice. These values may be embedded tacitly in organisational processes and routines.

(b) Those values will need to be important to organisational actors and internalised amongst many of the people. Those values may also be integral to the staff's beliefs and their lifestyle.

(c) There needs to be a sufficient amount of organisational space and organisational slack (Topos) where values debate and contestation can take place. This may be formally (for example through cross project groups), or through informal processes.

(d) There is a need for organisational structures which allow organisational actors to influence decision making, especially value carriers and those in parts of the organisation critical to core values.

(e) A culture that demonstrates and models a strongly supportive stance to those core values and upholds them in espoused and tacit ways.

(f) External advocates may act as a latent mechanism triggered in crisis situations to add additional weight to organisational values either internally or externally.

2. External environment:

(a) An engagement with the field of operation (for example the clients, customers, etc) that enables support, reinforcement, adaption, transformation of those values.

(b) There is a difference between the operation of commercial markets and the quasi-markets of the public sector. Both may offer constraints and supports to organisational values. Niche commercial markets can act to support values. Degeneration or decline is not inevitable even in constrained circumstances. High voluntary (for charities) or high surplus independent income (for commercially orientated organisations) offers no guarantee of values reproduction. Having a role as a perceived 'expert' organisation may offer advantages in negotiating in public sector markets. Active negotiation processes with funders may enable the support and nurturance of values.

3. Inter-organisational:

Inter-organisational networks that act to sustain the organisational values may act as additional mechanisms to support values reproduction. (For example these may be professional networks, or communities of practice or activists through social movements).

• Contingent on type of values

The above configuration of value reproductive processes and practices will be locally contingent. It may depend, for example, on the organisation's field, the current threats and opportunities, and the kind of values.

7.3 Values Reproduction: towards a schema

This section draws together the findings from the last chapter with some of the theoretical ideas. My aim (see Figure 7.1) is to suggest the following schema to aid our thinking about the reproduction of organisational values.

To understand the reproduction of organisational values may require us to examine a configuration of organisational processes, cultural features within the context of structural constraints or supports. The schema is set within a relatively stable social environment within a UK context. The aim here is not to set a recipe for organisational values reproduction. Rather, the aim is to summarise some of the features, and extend some of the discoveries made during this research. Some features, for example, were studied here in more detail (value carriers) while others (external advocates) were glimpsed but not studied in depth. This also builds on the specification of values suggested at the end of chapter 3 and the summary adapted from Stryjan at the end of chapter 6. It assumes both 'structure' and 'agency' factors to be implicated in value reproduction. It then specifies a range of factors that may be implicated in values reproduction. This basic model is offered as a preliminary framework for other researchers to critique, test and develop.

7.4 Contesting not Embalming

At this point it is necessary to remind ourselves that the reproduction of the organisation is not necessarily equivalent to the reproduction of its values. Survival, as Stryjan (1989) pointed out, is not the same as reproduction. An organisation might structurally persist, it might even undertake the same activities, but it may have altered its organisational values so far as to be unrecognisable. Debating questions of values is a common, crucial and unavoidable topic in social economy organisations. Should Greenpeace endorse an electricity company selling 'green' electricity? Should a co-operative elect managers? Should a mutual organisation, such as a building society, convert to a bank owned by shareholders? With 'missionary organisations' (Mintzberg 1998:361) we are keen to know the mission and values and whether they are adhered to in practise in contemporary life. We also need to know that such organisations are thinking and sensing for new circumstances.

Organisational values should not then be seen as fixed. They need to take account of new occurrences and new interpretations of the social world. We often know when a social economy organisation is alive and alert by the quality of contest and debate on values issues. Values are not the precious jewellery left in the organisational trophy cupboard. Rather, they should be the messy currency passed from hand to hand. An analogy here might help. The embalmed body of Mao lies in the mausoleum in Tiananmen

Square. It may have been placed there symbolically by anxious leaders to represent the persistence of their revolution. Without further examination of contemporary social relations in China we are entitled to ask whether it may also represent its ossification. With value based organisations persistence, while beguiling, is not alone sufficient to convince us of value sustenance. The argument here is that values are for contesting not embalming.

Appendix 1:

Exploratory Study: organisations suggested by 'experts' as examples of quality social economy organisations and sorted by type (June 1999)

Organisations in bold were contacted for interviews either for the exploratory study (*) or the main study (**).

1. Co-operatives

(significantly involved in trading)

Daily Bread Cooperative (2 mentions)

Poptel (2 mentions)

Suma wholefoods * (3 mentions)

Total Coverage (2 mentions)

Community Economy

Wrekin Homecare Co-operative

Centre For Alternative Technology **

Brixton Cycles (Brixton)

Magpie Recycling Co-op (Brighton)

IT Collective in Cambridge

Delta T Devices in Cambridge

MD Peter Cockerton

Paperback

Oxford Swindon & Gloucester

Co-op Society * (consumer co-operative)

Exchange [co-operative?]

Equal Exchange [co-operative?]

Shared Interest [co-operative?]

2 Voluntary Organisations

(significantly involved in trading/enterprise)

Bristol Area Community Enterprise

Network (BACEN) (3 mentions)

Bootstrap Enterprises * (2 mentions)

Spitalfields Small Business Association*

The Environment Trust, London

Finsbury Park Community Trust

Priory Campus, Barnsley

Orient Regeneration, London

Royds Community Association

Banks of the Wear CHA

Kath Lock Centre, Manchester

Third Wave Centre * Derby

Govan Workspace * Glasgow

Traidcraft

Big Issue

Christian Ethical Investment Group

3. Voluntaries

(significant service style organisations)

Tendring Community Transport

Ormiston Trust * **

St Mary's Church in Aylesbury

Women Rape Crisis Centres

Samaritans

Kids Club Network

Cambridge Housing Society

Anchor Trust *

Women Therapy Centre

United Response [?]

4. Neighbourhood/ community based

Matson Neighbourhood Project

Community Action Furness *

5. Advocacy/ campaigning voluntaries

Intermediate Technology

Greenpeace

Environment South East * (anonymised)

World Wildlife Fund *

Ecology Centre

National Rural Enterprise Centre

Appendix 2:

Exploratory Study: Organisations Interviewed July 1999

1. Co-operatives (significantly involved in trading)

Suma Wholefood Wholesaler, Halifax

2. Voluntary Organisations (significantly involved in trading/enterprise)

Bootstrap Enterprises

Govan Workspace, Glasgow

Spitalfields Small Business Association, London

(A regeneration organisation based in Derbyshire - no reply)

3. Neighbourhood/ community based (grant or contracting regimes with state sector, possibly some commercial market orientation)

Community Action Furness, Barrow-in-Furness

4. Voluntary organisations - service style (significant service style organisations presumed to be in either grant or contract regimes with statutory authorities)

Ormiston Trust, Cambridge

World Wildlife Fund, Surrey

Anchor Trust, Oxford

5. Voluntary organisations - advocacy/ campaigning style

Environment South East (anonymised)

Campaigning Housing Organisation, South East (anonymised)

Appendix 3:

Exploratory Study Question Script for Phone Interviews: June 1999

• General research question areas:

- How do social economy organisations ensure their core organisational values are reproduced/ kept alive?
- What are the processes which they use, tacitly or overtly?
- Do different kinds of social economy organisations use different ways to reproduce their values?
- Which processes work best and why?

Specific research questions:

1. What are the explicit organisational values?

How would you describe your organisation's core values? These might be explicit stated values put in publications or mission statements or director's speeches etc.

2. Tacit organisational values

Can you think of any values which, although not explicitly written down, are so obvious everyone holds them (the kinds of things that 'everyone round here believes are important')?

3. What are the key challenges going on in the organisations at present?

What are the key organisational challenges facing your organisation at the moment?

4. How have values (or how might they) have affected these challenges?

How, (or are), issues of your organisation's values affecting these challenges?

5. How do new people get the hang of the organisation's values?

Talking informally, reading about what the organisation states, induction, 'we recruit people that way', policy discussions, informal chats at lunch, in the pub, away days....etc?

6. Are there ever conflicts between what you do and the organisational values?

This might mean any conflicts you notice between activities and either the stated or the assumed values of the organisation.

7. How, or are, the organisational values ever revisited/ revised?

How is this done, who is involved?

8. Do you think there are specific places in the organisation where the values are especially created, made new, influenced, set?

9. In what ways does the client base/ customers/ people you aim to influence/ affect your values?

10. Anything else you want to add about the ways that your organisation maintains, develops or communicates its organisational values internally?

Appendix 4:

Main Study: letter to organisational contacts

dd.mm.yy

Name

Title

Organisation

Address line 1

Address line 2

Address line 3

Postcode

Dear xx,

Re: Research on Organisational Values in Social Economy Organisations

Further to our phone conversation today thanks for making some time for me in connection with the research on organisational values at [organisation]. I look forward to seeing you on [dd.mm] at [yy] for 30/40 minutes. Thank you for the initial help by email. I am enclosing some background information on the project for your information.

My key questions are around how does [organisation] keep to a sense of it's essential organisational values and beliefs? We could use an example which involves debate around values. I will have some questions to kick us off so don't feel the need to do lots of preparation. The idea is to have a semi-structured exploratory conversation.

Do ring (01273 504527) or email if you have any queries. I look forward to meeting you on the 1st April.

Yours sincerely

Mike Aiken

Appendix 5:

Main Study: cover of leaflet sent to organisational contacts

The Reproduction of Organisational Values in Voluntary and Co-operative Organisations

This leaflet is for people interested in participating in, or knowing more about, a current research project into not-for-private-profit organisations.

The research will look at how quality voluntary and co-operative organisations sustain their organisational values. What are the processes, practices and structures that enable one organisation to remain vibrant, relevant and value based, while another may decline, and degenerate into a pure commercial concern or one that is ossified? This is an important question for all those committed to seeing the the not- for-profit or social economy sector thrive.

In the 1990s in the UK we witnessed the de-mutualisation of major building societies and the further decline of parts of the consumer co-operative sector, while many voluntary organisations faced the dangers of co-option or extinction in the growing contract culture. Value based organisations are at the heart of our civic society yet our understanding of how they maintain themselves as value led is still underdeveloped. This study aims to be a contribution to that area of our knowledge.

This study will examine up to eight successful not-for-profit organisations to try to understand what it is they do to keep close to their values. By talking to managers, staff or trustees the aim is to build an interpretive picture of how organisational participants see the value reproduction process. It will concentrate on a recent event or episode to help focus the thinking on a particular value, or set of values.

Appendix 6:

Main Study Interview Questions Dec 00

• Basic Information

1. You: name, role, involvement, how long involved...?
2. Infinity, when formed, main aims, structure?
3. Key values of Infinity - what does it believe in (could be things it might SAY as well as say ways of working, informal practices?)

• Key areas

4. How does Infinity keep hold of what it believes in (organisational values)?
5. How does what it believes in get defined and agreed?
6. Can we spell out what Infinity holds as central?
7. Is there a set of typical Infinity members/ participants/ target profile?
8. Are there roles to inform new people who get involved?
9. Are there 'values' that are celebrated or kept slightly quiet. /or is Infinity maybe necessarily task focussed?
10. Are there particular moments/ incidents when this becomes crystallised?
11. What effect do wider social movements, legislative changes, key people in the group, funding, peer organisations, member/customer base, technology etc have on what Infinity does/doesn't do at crucial points?
12. Can we think of examples of these?
13. What would stop Infinity turning into a straight forward commercial organisation? Mechanisms, culture, member control, structure etc?
14. What challenges might Infinity face as/if it becomes bigger/ even more successful?
15. What keeps Infinity 'Infinity like'!?

• Values incident/example: ?

- * Background toWhat context here? Who is now involved in decisions about this.
- * What is the composition of the group making the decisions about this?
- * Who else will have a say? Where will it go after this committee?
- * Composition of this group - kinds of stakeholders involved?

• Prompt areas - more detailed questions

Management/ leadership styles

- leadership style
- senior people in Infinity
- charismatic people at any level
- certain key people (how they were as people)
- key roles (having certain roles in the org)
- habits & routines (we always do THIS when
- we get into a situation like this
- what colleagues/peers in Infinity would think
- other

Organisational structures

- regular meetings inside org
- meeting with partner/similar orgs
- management supervision
- written rules
- policy
- experience in the field
- key management meetings
- annual meeting
- public meetings
- written value statements
- Voice of members
- Training

Culture

- the kind of people we are round here

- our behaviour
- habits
- the symbols we use
- our ceremonies
- informal discussions (in pub, cafe, over tea/coffee)
- we got told to do things

The Environment around us

- especially funding
- customers
- members
- board
- trustees
- peer organisations
- general public
- press
- our understanding of existing legislation
- new laws being proposed

Political/social climate

- We just couldn't ignore the fact that 'x' was going on in the wider world
- Social currents, the Zeitgeist
- Peers eg what other organisations were doing like us
- Events/specific happenings/crisis

Appendix 7:

**Main Study: invitation to cross-organisational seminar
for organisations involved, November 2001**

Invitation.....

You are warmly invited to a small group seminar on
Thursday 1st November 1.45 - 4.45

.....

How do not-for-private-profit organisations maintain and reproduce their organisational values? A chance to participate in, and learn from, an ESRC research project.

- Introductory talk on emerging research findings
- Participative exercise on organisational values
- Compare, and learn about, your and other organisation's approaches
 - Comment on the research project's findings
- Buffet lunch • Tea/coffee

.....

Venue: London Voluntary Sector Resource Centre, 356 Holloway Road,
London N7
Holloway Road Underground Station (10 mins by tube from Kings Cross)

Please confirm your attendance: Mike Aiken, Co-operatives Research
Centre, Faculty of Technology CCC, Open University, Walton Hall, Milton
Keynes MK7 6AA.

Email: m.aiken@open.ac.uk Phone: 01273 698234

Bibliography

- Abbott, D. (1998) Dilemmas of Researching Poverty In *Finding out Fast: investigative skills for policy and development*(Ed, Thomas, A., Chataway, J., and Wuyts, M.) Milton Keynes: Open University.
- Ackroyd, S. (2000) Connecting Organisations and Societies In *Realist Perspectives on Management and Organisations*(Ed, Ackroyd, S., Fleetwood, S.) London: Routledge.
- Ackroyd, S., Fleetwood, S. (2000) *Realist Perspectives on Management and Organisations*, London: Routledge.
- Adirondack, S. (1998) *Just about Managing: effective management for voluntary organisations and community groups*, London: London Voluntary Service Council.
- Aiken, M. (2000) Reflexive Modernisation and the Social Economy Studies in *Social and Political Thought*, 1(2): 3 - 21.
- Allison, G., Zelikow, P. (1999) *Essence of a Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, New York: Longman.
- Alvesson, M., Willmott, H. (1996) *Making Sense of Management - A Critical Introduction*, London: Sage.
- Archer, M. (1998) Introduction: Realism in the Social Science In *Critical Realism: Essential Readings*(Ed, Archer, M., Bhaskar, R. Collier, A. et al) London: Routledge.
- Archer, M. (1998) Realism and Morphogenesis In *Critical Realism: Essential Readings*(Ed, Archer, M., Bhaskar, R. Collier, A. et al) London: Routledge.
- Argyris, C., and Schön, D.A. (1978) *Organizational Learning: a Theory of Action Perspective*, Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley.
- Arizmendiarieta, J. M. (undated) *Reflections of Don José Maria Arizmendiarieta*, Otalara, Spain: Mondragon Corporacion Cooperativa.
- Ashman, D., Brown L.D. and Zwick E. (1998) The Strength of Strong and Weak Ties; Building Social Capital for the Formation and Governance of Civil Society Resource Organisations Non-Profit *Management and Leadership*, 9(2), 152 - 185.
- Ball, C. (1992) Remuneration Policies and Employment Practices: some dilemmas in the voluntary sector, In *Issues in Voluntary and Non-profit Management*(Ed, Batsleer, J., Cornforth, C., Paton, R.) Wokingham, England: Addison Wesley.
- Barnard, C. I. (1938) *The Function of the Executive*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Batsleer, J. (1996) Organizational Culture In *Managing Voluntary and Non-profit Enterprises B789: Book 9 Environment, Culture and Structure*(Ed, Batsleer, J., Cornforth, C., Paton, R.) Milton Keynes: Open University Business School.
- Bauman, Z. (1992) *Intimations of Postmodernity*, London: Routledge.
- Beck, U. (1994) The Reinvention of Politics: Towards a Theory of Reflexive Modernization In *Reflexive Modernization: Politics, Tradition and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order*(Ed, Beck, U., Giddens, A., Lash, S.) Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Beck, U. (1997) *The Reinvention of Politics: rethinking modernity in the global social order*, Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Becker, H. S., Geer, B., Hughes, E.C., Strauss, A.L. (1961) *Boys in White: Student Culture in Medical School*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Berger, P., and Luckman, T. (1991) *The Social Construction of Reality: a Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*, London: Penguin.

- Bernstein, C., and Woodward, B. (1974) *All the President's Men*, New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Bhaskar, R. (1979) *The Possibility of Naturalism: A Philosophical Critique of the Contemporary Human Sciences*, London: Routledge.
- Billis, D. A. (1989) *Theory of the Voluntary Sector : a working paper*, London: LSE.
- Birchall, J. (1988) *Building Communities the Co-operative Way*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Birkhölzer, K. (1996) Social Economy, Community Economy In *People's Economy: Wirtschaft von Unten*(Ed, Döring, R., Kegler, H, and Zimmerman, K.) Dessau: Bauhaus Dessau Foundation.
- Blomqvist (1998) Towards a Human-Scientific Theory of Action on Co-operation Review of *International Co-operation*, 91(1).
- Boden, D. (1994) *The Business of Talk: Organizations in Action*, Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Bourdieu, P., and Wacquant, L. (1996) The Structure and Logic of Bourdieu's Sociology In *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*(Ed, Bourdieu, P., and Wacquant, L.) Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Brown, H. (1992) *Women Organising*, London: Routledge.
- Bryman, A. (2001) *Social Research Methods*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Burns, T., and Stalker, G.M. (1961) *The Management of Innovation*, London: Tavistock.
- CAT (1995) *Crazy Idealists: the CAT story*, Machynlleth: Centre for Alternative Technology.
- CAT (1999) *Annual Review Centre for Alternative Technology*, Machynlleth, Powys SY20 9AZ.
- Chataway, J., and Joffe, A. (1998) Communicating Results In *Finding out Fast*(Ed, Thomas, A., Chataway, J., and Wuyts, M.) London: Sage.
- Chataway, J. (2000) The Private Sector and Competitive Markets in Development In *Managing Development: understanding inter-organizational relationships*(Ed, Robinson, D., Hewitt, T. and Harriss, J.) London: Sage.
- Child, J. (1977) *Organizations: a guide to problems and practice*, London: Harper Row.
- Clark, P. (2000) *Organisations in Action: Competition between Contexts*, London: Routledge.
- Clandinin, D.J., and Connelly, F.M. (1998) Personal Experience Methods, In *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*(Ed, Denzin, N. K., Lincoln, Y.S) London: Sage.
- Co-operative Commission (2001) *The Co-operative Advantage: creating a successful family of Co-operative businesses*, January 2001.
- Coin St (1998?) *There is Another Way (the story of Coin Street)*, Coin Street Community Builders, 99 Upper Ground, London SE1 9YB.
- Collier, A. (1994) *Critical Realism: An Introduction to Roy Bhaskar's Philosophy*, London: Verso.
- Cornforth. C., T., A., Lewis, J., Spear, R. (1988) *Developing Successful Worker Co-operatives*, London: Sage.
- Coutu, D. L. (2002) The Anxiety of Learning: Interview with Edgar H. Schein Harvard *Business Review*, March/April 2002: pp100 - 106.
- CRU (1982) *Mondragon Co-operatives - Myth or Model?*, Milton Keynes: Co-operatives Research Unit, Open University.
- Czarniawska-Joerges, B. (1989) Merchants of Meaning: Management Consulting in the Swedish Public Sector In *Organisational Symbolism*(Ed, Turner, B. A.) Berlin: de

- Gruyter.
- Dahrendorf (2001) *Challenges to the Voluntary Sector*, London: CAF, Arnold Goodman Lecture, 17 July 2001.
- Dartington, T. (1992) Professional Management in Voluntary Organizations: some Cautionary Notes In *Issues in Voluntary and Non-profit Management*(Ed, Batsleer, J., Cornforth, C., Paton, R.) Wokingham, England: Addison Wesley.
- Dawson, S. (1996) *Analysing Organisations*, Basingstoke: Macmillan.
- de Vaus, D. (2001) *Research Design in Social Research*, London: Sage.
- Deal, T. E., Kennedy, A.A. (1991) Values: The Core of Culture In *Corporate Cultures*(Ed, Gay, P.) Harmondsworth, London: Penguin.
- Dean, M. (2002) Out on the Street In *Guardian, Society Supplement*, 3 July 2002: pp 10 - 11.
- Dees, G. (1998) Enterprising Non-profits *Harvard Business Review*, January/February 1998 pp55 - 61.
- Defourny, J., and Borzaga, C. (2001) *Social Enterprise in Europe*, London: Routledge.
- Denzin, N. K., and Lincoln, Y.S. (Ed) (1998a) *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*, London: Sage.
- Denzin, N. K., Lincoln, Y.S. (Ed) (1998b) *The Landscape of Qualitative Research: Theories and Issues*, London: Sage.
- Diani, M. (1992) The Concept of a Social Movement *The Sociological Review*, 40(1), 1 - 25.
- DiMaggio, P. J., and Powell, W.W. (1991) The Iron Cage Revisited: institutional isomorphism and collective rationality in organizational fields In *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*(Ed, Powell, W. W., and DiMaggio, P.J.) London: University of Chicago Press.
- Douthwaite, R. (1996) *Short Circuit: Strengthening Local Economies for a Security in an Unstable World*, Dartington: Green Books Resurgence.
- Drucker, P. (1994) *Managing the Non-profit Organisation: Practices and Principles*, Oxford: Butterworth Heinemann.
- DTI and DfEE (1997) *Competitiveness through Partnerships with People*, London: DTI.
- Dumas, C., and Blodgett, M. (1999) Articulating Values to Inform Decision Making: Lessons from Family Firms Around the World *International Journal of Value-Based Management*, Kluwer Academic, 12, 209 - 221.
- Dun and Bradstreet (2000) *Key British Enterprises*, UK: Dun and Bradstreet.
- Easton, G. (2000) Case Research for Industrial Networks In *Realist Perspectives on Management and Organisations*(Ed, Ackroyd, S., Fleetwood, S.) London: Routledge.
- EC (1997) Communication from the Commission on Promoting the Role of Voluntary Organisations and Foundations in Europe Luxembourg: European Commission DG XXIII.
- Eschle, C., and Stammers, N. (2002) Taking Part: Social movements, INGOS and global change *Social and Political Thought Seminar* 20. 6. 2002.
- Esping-Anderson, G. (1990) *Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*, Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Eurostat (1997) *The Co-operative, Mutual and Non-profit Sector in the European Union*, Luxembourg: European Commission.
- Fine, M. (1998) Locating the Field, In *The Landscape of Qualitative Research: Theories and Issues*, (Ed, Denzin, N. K., Lincoln, Y.S) London: Sage.
- Galbraith, J. R. (1980) Organisational Design: an Information Processing View In

- Organisations as Systems*(Ed, Spear, R., and Lockett, M.) Milton Keynes: Open University.
- Garside, P. L. (2001) Reassessing Voluntary Action in English Housing Provision post 1900 *Journal of Social Policy*, 30(4), 613 - 636.
- du Gay, P. (2000) *In Praise of Bureaucracy: Weber, Organization, Ethics*, London: Sage.
- Gaventa, J. (1990s undated) *The Empowerment Zone/ Employment Community Learning Initiative Knoxville*, TN: Community Partnership Center, University of Tennessee.
- Gee, J. P., Hull, G., Lankshear, C. (1996) *The New Work Order: Behind the Language of the New Capitalism*, St Leonards, NSW: Allen and Unwin.
- Geertz, C. (1993) *The Interpretation of Cultures*, London: Fontana..
- Giddens, A. (1984) *The Constitution of Society*, Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Giddens, A. (1994) Living in a Post-Traditional Society In *Reflexive Modernization: Politics, Tradition and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order*(Ed, Beck, U., Giddens, A., Lash, S.) Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Giddens, A. (1998) *Conversations with Anthony Giddens: Making Sense of Modernity*, Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Gilchrist, A., and Taylor, M. (1997) Community Networking: developing strength through diversity In *Contested Communities: experiences, struggles, policies*(Ed, Hoggett, P.) Bristol: Policy Press.
- Glancey, J. (2002) Heart of Gold: an inner-city estate that's a joy to live in? In *Guardian (supplement)*, 8.4.02 pp 10 -11.
- Glaser, B. G., and Strauss, A.L. (1967) *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*, London: Weidenfield and Nicolson.
- Goodall , R. (2000) Organising Cultures: practising 'the professional' in UK charity shops *NCVO Research Conference, 5 - 6th September 2000, Birmingham University*.
- Gribben, C., Robb, S. and Wilding, K. (2002) *The Third Sector: Vision for the Future*, London: National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) and Ashridge.
- Grzywinski, R. (1991) The New Old Fashioned Banking *Harvard Business Review*, May/June 1991, pp 87 - 98.
- Guba, E. G., and Lincoln, Y.S. (1998) Competing Paradigms in Qualitative Research In *The Landscape of Qualitative Research*(Ed, Denzin, N. K., Lincoln, Y.S) London: Sage.
- Hammersley, M. (1992) *What's Wrong with Ethnography: Methodological Explorations*, London: Routledge.
- Handy, C. B. (1985) *Understanding Organizations*, London: Penguin.
- Handy, C. B. (1988) *Understanding Voluntary Organizations*, London: Penguin.
- Harper, P. (1995) Footnotes from the Centre *Annals of Earth* 1995.
- Hirschman, A.O. (1992) *Rival Views of Market Society and Other Recent Essays*, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.
- Hofstede, G. (1994) *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*, London: HarperCollinsBusiness.
- Huberman, A. M., and Miles, M.B. (1998) Data Management and Analysis Methods In *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*(Ed, Denzin, N. K., Lincoln, Y.S) London: Sage.
- Hudson, M. (1999) *Managing Without Profit: The Art of Managing Third Sector Organizations*, London: Penguin.
- Jeavons, T. H. (1992) When Management is the Message: Relating Values to Management in Nonprofit Organizations *Non-profit Management and Leadership*, 2(4), 403-417.

- Jeavons, T. H. (1994) *When the Bottom Line is Faithfulness: Management of Christian Service Organizations*, Indiana University Press: Indianapolis.
- Jeffrey, N. (1997) Coin Street Yields a High Return In *New Statesman* 20.6.97 pp32 - 34.
- Kanter, R. M. (1988) *The Change Masters: Corporate Entrepreneurs at Work*, London: Unwin.
- Kendall, J., and Knapp, M. (1996) *The Voluntary Sector in the UK in 1996*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Kendall, J., and Almond, S. (1998) *The UK Voluntary (Third) Sector in Comparative Perspective: exceptional growth and transformation*, York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
- Korten, D. C. (1990) *Towards the 21st Century: Voluntary Action and the Global Agenda*, Connecticut: Kumarian Press.
- Landry, C., Morly, D., Southwood, R., and Wright, P. (1985) *What a Way to Run a Railway*, London: Comedia.
- Langrish, J. (1993) Case Studies as a Biological Research Process Design *Studies*, 14 (4), 357 - 364.
- Lawrence, P., and Lorsch, J. (1967) *Organization and Environment: Managing Differentiation and Integration*, Harvard: Graduate School of Business Administration.
- Layder, D. (1998) *Sociological Practice: Linking Theory and Social Research*, London: Sage.
- Le Grand, J., and Bartlett, W. (Ed.) (1993) *Quasi-Markets and Social Policy*, Basingstoke, Hants: Macmillan Press.
- Lilley, J. (1999) The Production, Consumption and Disposal of Information in Non-Conventional Organisations unpublished report, Department of Management and Centre for Social Theory and Technology, Keele University.
- Lindenfield, F., Rothschild-Whitt, J. (1982) *Workplace Democracy and Social Change*, Boston: Porter Sargent.
- Mackintosh, M. (1998) Government and the Economy In *Economics and Changing Economics OU*(Ed, Mackintosh, M., Brown, V., Costello, N. et al) Milton Keynes: Open University.
- Mackintosh, M. (1998) Social Markets In *Economics and Changing Economics*(Ed, Mackintosh, M., Brown, V., Costello, N. et al) Milton Keynes: Open University.
- Macpherson of Cluny, S. W. (1999) The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry London, Presented to Parliament, February 1999.
- Martin, J. (1998) *Organizational Behaviour*, London: International Thomson Business Press.
- McEwan, T. (2001) *Managing Values and Beliefs in Organisations*, Harlow: Pearson Education.
- Meister, A. (1984) *Participation, Associations, Development and Change*, New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books.
- Melucci, A. (1989) *Nomads of the Present: Social Movements and individual Needs in Contemporary Society*, London: Hutchinson Radius.
- Mertens, S. (1999) Non-Profit Organisations and Social Economy: Two Ways of Understanding the Third Sector *Annals of Public and Co-operative Economics*, 70 (3), 501 - 520.
- Meyer, J. W. (1998) Rationalized Environments In *Institutional Environments and Organizations: Structural Complexity and Individualism*(Ed, Scott, W. R., and

- Meyer, J.W.) London: Sage.
- Michels, R. (1949) *Political Parties: a sociological study of oligarchical tendencies of modern democracy*, New York: Free Press.
- Milofsky, C. (1997) Tradition Non-profit and Voluntary Sector *Quarterly*, 26(3).
- Millington, B., Adamantiadi, M., Briscoe, B., and Spear, R. (2000) *Principled Management*, Milton Keynes: Co-operatives Research Unit.
- Mintzberg, H. (1983) *Power in and around Organizations*, Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall.
- Mintzberg, H. (1999) Ideology and the Missionary Organisation In *The Strategy Process (revised European Edition)*(Ed, Mintzberg, H., Quinn, J.B., Ghoshal, S.) London: Prentice Hall.
- Moore, M. (2000) Competition within and between Organizations In *Managing Development: Understanding Inter-Organizational Relationships*(Ed, Robinson, D., Hewitt, T., and Harriss, J.) London: Sage.
- Morgan, G. (1986) *Images of Organization*, London: Sage.
- NEF (1997) Ways of Thinking about the Social Economy (Leaflet) London: New Economics Foundation.
- Nonaka, I., Takeuchi, H. (1995) *The Knowledge Creating Company: How Japanese Companies Create the Dynamics of Innovation*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ormiston (2000) Annual Report 2000 Ormiston Children and Families Trust, 333 Felixstowe Road, Ipswich IP3 9BU.
- Ott, J. S. (1989) *The Organizational Culture Perspective*, Pacific Grove, California: Brooks/Cole.
- Parkin, F. (1986) *Max Weber*, London: Routledge.
- Paton, R. (1992) The Social Economy: Value Based Organisations in the Wider Society In *Issues in Voluntary and Non-profit Management*(Ed, Batsleer, J., Cornforth, C., Paton, R.) Wokingham: Addison-Wesley.
- Paton, R., and Cornforth, C. (1992) What's Different about Managing in Voluntary and Non-Profit Organisations? In *Issues in Voluntary and Non-Profit Management*(Ed, Batsleer, J., Cornforth, C., Paton, R.).
- Paton, R., with Edwards, C. (1995) *Managing with a Purpose, Book 1 B789*, Milton Keynes: Open University Business School.
- Paton, R. (1996) How are Values Handled in Voluntary Agencies? In *Voluntary Agencies: Challenges of Organisation and Management*(Ed, Billis, D., and Harris, M.) London: Macmillan.
- Paton, R. (1999) The Trouble with Values In *International Perspectives on Voluntary Action: Reshaping the Third Sector*(Ed, Lewis, D.) London: Earthscan Publications.
- Pawson, R., and Tilley, N. (1998) *Realistic Evaluation*, London: Sage.
- Pearce, J. (1993) *At the Heart of the Community Economy*, London: Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.
- Pearce, J. (1996) Community Enterprises in Scotland: acting locally In *People's Economy: Wirtschaft von Unten*(Ed, Döring, R., Kegler, H, and Zimmerman, K.) Dessau: Bauhaus Dessau Foundation.
- Pestoff, V. A. (1994) Beyond Exit and Voice in Social Services - Citizens as Co-producers In *Delivering Welfare; Repositioning Non-profit and Co-operative Action in Western European Welfare States*(Ed, Six, P., and Vidal, I.) Barcelona: Centre d'Iniciatives de l'Economica Social (CIES).
- Peters, T., Waterman, R.H. (1995) *In Search of Excellence: Lessons from America's Best-*

- Run Companies*, London: HarperCollinsBusiness.
- Polanyi, M., Prosch, H. (1975) *Meaning*, London: University of Chicago Press.
- Porter, J. (1993) Critical Realist Ethnography: The Case of Racism and Professionalism in a Medical Setting *Sociology*, 27: 591 - 609.
- Powell, W. W., and DiMaggio, P.J. (1991) Introduction In *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis* London: University of Chicago Press.
- Putnam, D. (1993) *Making Democracy Work*, Chichester: Princeton University Press.
- Richards, T. J., and Richards, L. (1998) Using Computers in Qualitative Research In *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*(Ed, Denzin, N. K., Lincoln, Y.S) London: Sage.
- Richardson, L. (1998) A Method of Inquiry, In *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*(Ed, Denzin, N. K., Lincoln, Y.S) London: Sage.
- Rochester, C., and Billings, C. (2000) Convenient Slogan or Useful Theory? In search of the community sector *NCVO Research Conference Birmingham University*, September 5 - 6th 2000.
- Rosen, M. (1991) Coming to Terms with the Field: understanding and doing organizational ethnography, *Journal of Management Studies*, 28 (1), 1 -24.
- Rosenman, M. (2000) Morphing into the Market: the Danger of Missing Mission *NCVO Researching the Voluntary Sector Conference*, Birmingham University, September 5 - 6th 2000.
- Rothschild-Whitt, J. (1982) The Collectivist Organization: an Alternative to Bureaucratic Models In *Workplace Democracy and Social Change*(Ed, Lindfield, F., Rothschild-Whitt, J.,) Boston, MA: Porter Sargent.
- Saxon-Harold, S., and Kendall, H. (1995) *Dimensions of the Voluntary Sector*, London: Charities Aid Foundation.
- Sayer, A. (1984) *Method in Social Science: A Realist Approach*, London: Hutchinson.
- Sayer, A. (2000) *Realism and Social Science*, London: Sage.
- Schein, E. H. (1985) *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Schwabenland, C. (2001) How do Chief Executives in UK and India Conceptualise Social Change *NCVO Research Conference*, NCVO, London, September 4th 2001.
- Schwartzman, H. B. (1993) *Ethnography in Organizations*, London: Sage.
- Scott, D., Alcock, P., Russell, L. and Macmillan, R. (2000) *Moving Pictures: Realities of Voluntary Action*, Bristol: The Policy Press.
- Scott, W. R., and Meyer, J.W. (1994) *Institutional Environments and Organizations: Structural Complexity and Individualism*, London: Sage.
- SEL (1999) *Social Enterprises in London: case studies in economic participation*, London: Social Enterprise London.
- Selznick, P. (1957) *Leadership in Administration: A Sociological Interpretation*, Evanston, Illinois: Row, Peterson and Co.
- Selznick, P. (1966) *TVA and the Grass Roots: a study in the Sociology of Formal Organization*, New York: Harper and Row.
- Shelter (2000) *Listen Up: report and accounts 1999/2000*, Shelter, 88 Old Street, London EC1V 9HU.
- Silverman, D. (1980) Socio-technical systems In *Organizations as Systems*(Ed, Lockett, R., and Spear, R.) Milton Keynes: Open University.
- Six, P. (1994a) Conclusion: Will Anyone Talk About 'the Third Sector' in Ten Years Time? In *Delivering Welfare; Repositioning Non-profit and Co-operative Action in Western European Welfare States*(Ed, Six, P., Vidal, I.) Barcelona: Centre

- d'Iniciatives de l'Economica Social (CIES).
- Six, P. (1994b) Introduction to Part 1: Public Policy, Social Policy and the Third Sector In *Delivering Welfare; Repositioning Non-profit and Co-operative Action in Western European Welfare States*(Ed, Six, P., Vidal, I.) Barcelona: Centre d'Iniciatives de l'Economica Social (CIES).
- Smircich, L., and Calás, M.B. (1983) Concepts of Culture and Organisational Analysis *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 28(3) 339 -58.
- Smith, M. J. (1998) *Social Science in Question*, London: Sage.
- Spear, R., Leonetti, A. ,and Thomas, A. (1994) *Third Sector Care: prospects for co-operatives and other small care providers*, Milton Keynes: Co-operatives Research Unit, Open University.
- Spear, R. (2000) Re-asserting the Co-operative Advantage Research Project *Journal of Co-operative Studies*, 332, 95 -123.
- St. Mungo's (2001) *Annual Report 2000*, St Mungo's, Atlantic House, 1-3 Rockley Road, London W14 ODJ.
- Stake, R. E. (1995) *The Art of Case Study Design*, London: Sage.
- Stryjan, Y. (1989) *Impossible Organizations: Self Management and Organizational Reproduction*, Connecticut: Greenwood Press.
- Taylor, M. (1990) Directions for the Next Decade: Understanding Social and Institutional Trends London: National Council for Voluntary Organisations.
- Thomas, A. (1990) Technology and Worker Co-ops: Some UK evidence and a Framework for Investigation *Technology Analysis and Strategic Management*, 2(3), 307 - 320.
- Thomas, A. (1998) Challenging Cases In *Finding out Fast: investigative skills for policy and development*(Ed, Thomas, A., Chataway, J., Wuyts, M.) Milton Keynes: Open University.
- Thomas, A., Chataway, J., and Wuyts, M. (1998) *Finding out Fast: investigative skills for policy and development*, London: Sage.
- Townsend-Coles, C. (2000) *Report on Meetings* (unpublished personnel research report) Brighton City College, Pelham Street, Brighton BN1.
- Tripp, D. (1993) *Critical Incidents in Teaching: Developing Professional Judgement*, London: Routledge.
- UN (1992) *Earth Summit 92: the United Nations Conference on environment and development*, Rio de Janeiro: United Nations.
- Unity Trust Bank (1998) *Social Economy Conference Programme*, Birmingham: Unity Trust Bank.
- Van Maanan, J. (1988) *Tales of the Field*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Walker, A. (1989) *Restoring the Kingdom: The Radical Christianity of the House Church Movement*, London: Hodder and Stoughton.
- Webb, B. (1930) *The Co-operative Movement in Great Britain*, London: George Allen and Unwin.
- Weick, K. E. (1995) *Sensemaking in Organizations*, London: Sage.
- Wenger, E. (1998) *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning and Identity*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wenger, E., and Synder, W.M. (2000) Communities of Practice: The Organizational Frontier *Harvard Business Review*, Jan/Feb 2000: 139 - 145.
- Whyte, W. F., and Whyte, K.K. (1991) *Making Mondragon: the Growth and Dynamics of the Worker Co-operative Complex*, New York: Ithaca.
- Whyte, W. F., and Whyte, K.K. (1993) *Street Corner Society: The Social Structure of an*

- Italian Slum*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Wittgenstein, L. (1976) *Philosophical Investigations*, Oxford: Blackwell.
- Wright Mills, C. (1970) *The Sociological Imagination*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Wright, S. (1994) *Anthropology of Organizations*, London: Routledge.
- Wright, S. (1998) Politicization of 'Culture' *Anthropology Today*, 14(1), 7 - 15.
- Yin, R. K. (1994) *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, London: Sage.
- Zimmeck, M. (1998) *To Boldly Go: the voluntary sector and voluntary action in the new world of work*, Royal Society for the encouragement of the Arts, Manufacturers and Commerce, 8 John Adam Street, London WC2N 6EZ.
- Zucker, L. G. (1983) Organisations as Institutions In *Research in the Sociology of Organisations: Research Annual*, Vol. 2 (Ed, Bacharach, S. B.) London: JAI Press Inc.